

THE INDEPENDENT

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TODAY'S NEWS

ENGLAND/ITALY

Ince leads the team against his Italian friends

A nation waits, or at least the male half of the nation! As English fans prepare for tonight's decisive World Cup qualifying match against Italy in Rome, the burden of captaining the team went to Paul Ince, something of an irony: he only returned to England this summer after a spell with the Italian club Internazionale of Milan.

Full World Cup preview, including Scotland-Latvia, in Time Off, pages 24-6

British science for sale

In a Nineties version of the brain drain, British scientists are having to sell their expertise abroad in an effort to keep their research departments properly funded. The scientists say it is necessary because the new Government - which many of them voted for - have not provided any new money for research. The real problem, though, lies in the unwillingness of British companies to back home grown science and technology. Page 3

Hague begins fightback

The Labour Government lacks the core values of Toryism and "don't believe in anything except their own political success," William Hague told the Conservative conference at Blackpool. The new leader's speech mingled apologies with expressions of pride about the Tory heritage and was enthusiastically applauded by representatives. Page 11

'Straights' face ban

Discrimination is alive and kicking in Clubland - but now it is directed against heterosexuals. Bar-owners in parts of Manchester are employing drag queens and gay doormen to turn away straight night-clubbers. The clubs claim they are simply trying to preserve their authentic gay atmosphere. But is this positive discrimination or the rise of 'heterophobia'? Page 9

The Balmoral republic

A "Boer Republic" is being established this weekend just 50 miles east of Pretoria. Its founders - 200 Afrikaner families - say it is their right to go it alone and they have chosen a former British concentration camp, where thousands died at the beginning of the century, as the site. Its name is Balmoral. The blacks they evicted are bitter. Mary Braid reports on page 13

Rory's African diary

Four foreign aid projects in Africa are threatening the survival of animals and people, the comedian Rory Bremner discovered during his latest trip to Kenya and Tanzania. But he came upon many extraordinary things: from baboons and snakes... to Martin Clunes. His diary can be found on page 19

SEEN AND HEARD

British scientist wins Nobel Peace prize! Er - make that Ig Nobel prize. Harold Hillman, of the University of Surrey, has been awarded the Ig Nobel Peace Prize, awarded for his research report "The Possible Pain Experienced During Execution by Different Methods," published in the journal Perception 1993. The Ig Nobel awards are presented annually in front of a chaotic and loudly appreciative paper airplane-throwing audience for achievements which "cannot, or should not, be reproduced." A rather hurt Professor Hillman protested that he was trying to provide a scientific basis to protest against the electric chair.

Nobel prize for landmine heroes and heroines



Nobel cause, Nobel Prize: Jody Williams, co-ordinator of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) with a group of supporters in Oslo, during the conference which finalised the global treaty. Photograph: Eric Johansen/Reuters

The Nobel Committee yesterday awarded the Peace Prize to campaigners for a ban on landmines. The award is a tribute to the success of the campaign so far - where Diana, Princess of Wales, played a key role. Steve Crowshaw says it shows how a popular cause can triumph over governments, arms manufacturers and the military.

Yesterday's award is a triumph for those who believe in winning unwinnable victories. In the words of the Nobel committee's citation, it honours "a process which in the space of a few years changed a ban on anti-personnel mines from a vision to a feasible reality". Those who just a few years ago were portrayed by leading politicians as naive dreamers can celebrate.

At her home in Vermont, Jody Williams, co-ordinator of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, was "a little stunned" by the news. Ms Williams is joint recipient together with the Campaign, of the £600,000 prize. In London, the Mines Advisory Group, one of six co-founders of the campaign in 1992, was "very, very honoured".

An important figurehead for the campaign was Diana, Princess of Wales, whose family said that they were delighted. Her visit to Angola on behalf of the British Red Cross thrust the issue into the public eye as never before. Photographs of Diana's famous walk through an Angolan minefield dominated front pages around the world in January - and became even more famous, after her death. As the Red Cross noted yesterday, her visit was "a turning point". There

were even suggestions that she should be awarded a posthumous peace prize (an impossibility under Nobel rules).

But the Nobel committee was keen yesterday to emphasise that this was not just a posthumous award for Diana: "There were very many people involved."

The first initiative for the Campaign began just six years ago. In 1991, the New York-based Human Rights Watch published *The Coward's War*, calling for a worldwide ban on landmines. Two months later, Ms Williams - who had always been "the classic good kid", in her own phrase - agreed to spearhead the campaign.

For Ms Williams, who celebrated her 47th birthday on Thursday, the news came as "a hell of a birthday present". She started her life in campaigning work 15 years ago, when she was handed a leaflet as she got out of the subway in Washington. She became involved in pressure groups critical of US policy in central America. Through that work, she met leaders of the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation who were helping landmine victims obtain artificial limbs. That, in turn, led to the realisation that "just putting limbs on people was [ineffective] if you don't go to the heart of the problem". The coalition began humbly, with one office in Washington and one in Europe ("so we could call it the international campaign.")

In Britain, the Tory government was less than enthusiastic about a ban, saying that landmines were "legitimate defensive weapons". Michael Portillo, the former defence secretary, ruefully acknowledged this week that the government had sometimes seemed "indifferent to moral arguments", and that was certainly true of landmines. When Diana visited Angola, junior defence minister Earl Howe described her as a "loose cannon". Peter Vig-

gers, a member of the Commons defence select committee, declared: "The parallel that comes to mind is Brigitte Bardot and cats."

But the politicians' contempt backfired, as the campaign gained momentum. It worked with many people at local level all over the world; and it had an issue that seized the popular imagination, as direct and easily soluble. It was also adept at using the media.

The draft version of the landmine treaty, to be signed in Ottawa in December, was finally agreed by 90 countries at a three-week conference in Oslo last month.

The knock-on effects of yesterday's historic announcement are likely to be considerable. Within hours, President Boris Yeltsin declared that a previously reluctant Russia was ready to sign. For the moment, the United States remains in the odious company of China, North Korea, and Iraq in opposing the terms of the ban. Washington yesterday expressed its admiration for Ms Williams. But President Clinton was said to be "rock-solid confident" that the US should not sign up for the Ottawa treaty. Washington argues that a ban would force it to defuse minefields along the border between North and South Korea, thus weakening the safety of US troops.

Ms Williams said she would telephone President Clinton to press the case, and expressed the hope that those countries which have not yet agreed to sign the treaty would now do so. "This is what humanity is calling for," she said.

She remains tough on the US president - embarrassingly, for the would-be moral White House. "The US continues to try to maintain the fiction that it is a leader on the issue of eliminating land mines... How can you be a leader if you are not part of the process?"

INSIDE TODAY: THE MEZZO COOKBOOK



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THE NEW INDEPENDENT

'Independent' sales up

The Independent has had a remarkable month. Our ABC sales for September were 288,000, nearly 12 per cent up the previous month, the highest percentage rise of any national paper, broadsheet or tabloid. Our market share is the highest since July 1996 and, year on year, our September rise outshone rivals such as the Times and the Guardian. Liam Healy, chairman of Newspaper Publishing, said yesterday that the shareholders were very encouraged and were "totally committed" to the long-term development of The Independent and our Sunday sister, whose sales are up by 13 per cent.



ISM/Our new
culture magazine
TIME OFF/
Sport, travel &
leisure
YOUR MONEY/
Personal finance,
property & cars
THE EYE/Your
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guide

I.Q. of 145 and Can't Remember?

A FAMOUS international publisher reports that there is a simple technique for acquiring a powerful memory which can pay you real dividends in both business and social advancement. It works like magic to give you added poise, self-confidence and greater popularity.

The details of this method are described in his fascinating booklet, "Adventures in Memory", sent free on request.

According to this publisher, many people do not realise how much they can influence others simply by remembering accurately everything they see, hear or read. Whether in business, at social functions, or even in casual conversation with new acquaintances, there are ways in which you can dominate each situation simply by your ability to remember.

For example, you need never forget another appointment - ever! You can learn names, faces, facts, figures and foreign languages faster than you ever thought possible. Whole books and plays can be indelibly imprinted on your memory after a single reading. You could be more successful in your studies and examinations. At parties and dinners you may never again be at a loss for appropriate words or entertaining stories. In fact, you could be



Forget facts, figures? more poised and self-confident in everything you say and do. These are only a few of the ways in which you can benefit by possessing a trained memory.

To acquaint all readers of The Independent with the easy-to-follow rules for developing skill in remembering, we, the publishers, have printed full details of this interesting self-training method in a fascinating booklet, "Adventures in Memory", sent free on request. No obligation. No salesman will call. Just fill in and return the coupon on Page 6 (you don't even need to stamp your envelope), or write to: Memory and Concentration Studies, (Dept. IDMS7), FREEPOST 198, Manchester M60 3DL.



WEATHER Time Off, page 2
TELEVISION The Eye
CROSSWORD
Time Off, page 12

Web address: <http://www.independent.co.uk>

COLUMN ONE

No sugar for Tories in spin doctors' medicine

Forget the victories of Greg Rusedski or the award of the Nobel prize for Literature to iconoclast Dario Fo, the biggest winners this week have been the Labour party's spin doctors.

In the seven days earmarked for the birth of a new Tory party and the coronation of its leader, William Hague, the papers instead have been pre-occupied with a plethora of Labour wheezes and stunts.

Take Monday. Just another 24 hours for Tony Blair, the Prime Minister, who managed to meet Russian President Boris Yeltsin, take a trip on the Moscow underground and squeeze in a guest appearance on Russia's top soap *House 7, Entrance 4*. All guaranteed to bear hug the headlines while the Tories were making their way up to Blackpool.

Nut content with meeting the world's second most powerful man, Mr Blair was then visited 24 hours later by the world's richest man. Bill Gates was there to "pledge his support", but not his cash, to the Government's obsession with wiring up the nation's schools to the internet. Then those ubiquitous "senior Labour sources" popped up to reveal that the party was assembling a secret dossier on Tories who had been, allegedly, chanting sexual abuse at the new intake of women MPs. No proof was offered, and none was needed as the media happily swallowed the spin doctor's medicine.

Did anything else happen of note? Oh yes, William Hague's far reaching reforms of the Tory party were approved by its membership. But the Conservatives' constitutional earthquake was hardly the stuff that news-desks dream of and, besides, Mr Hague only got 36 per cent of the vote whereas the Prime Minister, according to those Labour sources again, had a 93 per cent approval rating.

Wednesday. Labour lands another punch and the Conservatives are busy battering themselves to death. Lord Tebbit unhelpfully and hysterically warned that a mix of cultures could turn Britain into "another Yugoslavia" only to be slapped down by the leadership hours later. Labour meanwhile decide it's time to stop teachers helping pupils to cheat, allegedly, in national curriculum tests and that the world needs to know that Greg Dyke - an FOB (Friend of Blair's) and creator of Roland Rat - will produce a new charter for the NHS. Neither had a pressing need for announcements now as both are stories for next summer, but they stole the thunder from the Tories.

And if you have got it, flaunt it. For the Labour press team the fun is not in retailing the news, but in manufacturing it. This was amply demonstrated by Charlie Whelan, the Chancellor's mouthpiece, on a fly-in-the-corridor-of-power piece of television shown earlier this week which showed the spin doctor predicting the London *Evening Standard's* front-page splash and then minutes later brandishing it like a trophy won in the war of words.

And it is not just the big Cabinet players who are courting the media lenses. Anne Taylor, leader of the House, was touring coffee houses in Holland - where marijuana can be freely purchased and smoked - on a fact-finding mission. Of course, Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, would never contemplate such a progressive measure but it helps to witness what ministers are missing and gets you onto the news.

William Hague on the other hand appears to be re-reading a speech made earlier by another dashing, right-winger and possible Conservative prime minister Michael Portillo - albeit to the whole conference - just in case anyone missed it the first time round.

Professionally one can only applaud the ceaseless art of Labour's spin doctors; but if this carries on it may soon be time to cut out the middle man of the media and simply print the party press release.

— Randeep Ramesh

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TOURIST RATES

Australia (dollars)	2.12	Italy (lira)	2.711
Austria (schillings)	19.24	Japan (yen)	190.92
Belgium (francs)	56.54	Malta (lira)	0.61
Canada (\$)	2.17	Netherlands (guilders)	3.08
Cyprus (pounds)	0.81	Norway (kroner)	11.05
Denmark (kroner)	10.49	Portugal (escudos)	276.82
France (francs)	9.20	Spain (pesetas)	230.65
Germany (marks)	2.75	Sweden (kroner)	11.92
Greece (drachmes)	435.84	Switzerland (francs)	2.29
Hong Kong (\$)	12.09	Turkey (lira)	271.536
Ireland (punts)	1.07	USA (\$)	1.58

Source: Thomson Cook
Rates for information purposes only

PEOPLE



Diving in: David Bellamy is drawing attention to the plight of reef environments

Bellamy swims with sharks to save coral seas

David Bellamy, the naturalist and broadcaster, dived into shark-infested waters yesterday evening to warn of the dangers facing the species due to the destruction of coral reefs.

The environmentalist swam with brown and tiger sharks in a tank at the London Aquarium to highlight a global survey which records widespread damage across the world to the living eco-systems.

Over 200 teams of divers in more than 40 countries took part in the survey to obtain the first-ever snapshot of the state of the world's reefs, studying environmentally fragile areas including Malaysia, the Red Sea and the Caribbean.

The findings highlight an alarming range of threats, including anchor damage, overfishing of commercial species, pollution and damaging dynamite fishing.

It is feared that 10 per cent of the world's reefs have already been degraded beyond recovery and that another 30 per cent are rapidly heading that way. Only 1 per cent have any official protection.

"If you need proof of the plunder of our coral

reefs and the need for an International Year of the Reef, ask yourselves where all the sharks have gone," Professor Bellamy said.

"More and more shark species are appearing in the red data book of endangered species, a sure sign that the natural balance of reefs is in danger.

"Once these large predators have gone to fuel the demand for shark-fin soup and shark steaks, populations of other fish and invertebrates explode, speeding the destruction of coral reefs.

"Of the 109 countries with reefs, over 85 per cent have suffered some kind of damage from our careless actions and in some cases the environmental and economic consequences have been disastrous.

"This destruction simply has to stop, otherwise within 40 years over half our planet's coral reefs will have vanished."

Alastair Harborne, UK Reef Check Co-ordinator said: "Reef Check clearly shows that if nothing is done now to save these rainforests of the seas, we risk losing some of the most beautiful, diverse and important habitats on earth."

Haughey's fib comes home to roost

Charles Haughey, the former Taoiseach, faces a humiliating sale of family silver in order to pay a crippling bill for legal costs later this month arising from his admission that he misled a judicial tribunal.

Assets said to be on offer to private bidders include Inchicillaun, his private Atlantic island with its own nature reserve, and Abbeville, his Georgian stately home at Kinsale, outside Dublin, with its large wooded estate, lake, racehorses and deer.

An executive in Mr Haughey's former accountancy firm is exploring how sales could realise funds to meet the legal costs. Discreet soundings are reportedly already being made among potential foreign buyers for the rocky island in the Blaskets off County Kerry.

In the early Eighties Mr Haughey, 72, built a substantial stone holiday home there where guests included his friend Francois Mitterrand, the French president.

Mr Haughey recently made redundant half the staff at the 280-acre Kinsale estate, some with 27 years service. Such prime development land would command well over £10m, but may not be sold in its entirety. Parts of the land belong to Mr Haughey's



sons, who have built homes there.

Mr Haughey's financial problems go beyond the expected six-figure bill from own tribunal legal team. When the McCracken inquiry into payments to politicians holds its final session later this month to fix costs, senior sources say the retired politician will face a huge additional demand incurred by his own failure to tell the truth. That, in turn, forced tribunal officials to mount expensive international investigations to trace bank transactions arranged to conceal the destination of the Dunne gifts.

In a moment of high drama, Mr Haughey (above), four-time Irish prime minister, accepted in July he received £1.3m from supermarket

chief Ben Dunne, a confessional U-turn followed by an admission that he had misled the tribunal and his legal team.

Earlier he flatly denied receiving the funds. Mr Haughey also faces rigorous tax inquiries from the Revenue Commissioners, themselves under criticism for failures to verify how Mr Haughey funded a lifestyle costing, the tribunal heard, more than three times his salary income.

Mr Haughey himself was dismissive of such detail. "I just want to say that I did not have a very lavish lifestyle, my work was my lifestyle. I never had to concern myself about my personal finances," he told the Tribunal.

— Alan Murdoch

UPDATE

MEDICINE

NHS defuses Millennium Bomb

Measures to tackle the so-called Millennium Bomb which is expected to play havoc with computers on the cusp of the year 2000 were announced yesterday by the NHS Executive.

By the end of 1998 the NHS must be fully prepared, Chief Executive of the NHS, Alan Langlands, said. A letter from Mr Langlands to NHS managers lays out a systematic approach to tackling the issue, and by 31 December 1998, chief executives will ensure that all critical systems are ready and fully tested to cope. Where systems or equipment cannot be repaired or replaced in time, they should ensure that comprehensive action plans are in place.

The NHS Executive will provide a one-stop help desk service to answer queries and give practical assistance to assist the NHS. Mr Langlands said: "Preparing for the year 2000 is now the highest non-clinical priority in the NHS. As Health Service managers our duty is to patients, and our competence is demonstrated by ensuring that we continue to provide high quality services. The Year 2000 is just such a challenge. Steps have already been taken to raise awareness of this problem, but now is the time for firm and visible action. This issue will be given priority by Chief Executives and senior clinicians in every part of the NHS."

LIFESTYLE

Women complain of sex hangovers

Almost 40 per cent of young women have had sex they later regretted because they were drunk, it was revealed yesterday.

The survey of 200 16-20 year-old girls also found that 55 per cent had started drinking by the time they were 14. Almost half of those questioned said spirits were their favourite tipple.

Lee Kynaston, editor of teenage magazine *19*, which carried out the study, said: "While it's clear from the survey findings that sex and alcohol don't mix, the most dangerous aspect of this is the implications this has for safe sex."

"Under the influence of drink, young women are likely to forgo the use of condoms and this can lead to unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and the danger of being infected with the Aids virus. Our message is to think before you drink and make sure the sex you do have is the kind you don't want to forget."

NATURE

Crime is in the air for wild birds

Crime against wild birds is still rife, despite interest in the environment at "an all-time high," a leading conservationist body warned yesterday.

Shooting, poisoning and egg-collection increased last year, although the total number of all offences reported was the lowest since 1990, according to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Apart from birds of prey, at least 70 birds were illegally shot, including cormorant, grey heron, mute and Bewick's swans, Kingfisher and even black-bird. Nests of non-birds-of-prey robbed included nationally rare birds such as black-throated diver, roseate tern and chough. Fifty-one prosecutions came to court in 1996, 42 successfully, with fines totalling £26,295 and costs £16,330.

Graham Wynne, conservation director of the RSPB, said: "At a time when the interest in birds and their environment is at an all-time high, it is a disgrace that the law is so widely flouted." The figures were published as the UK Conference of Police Wildlife Liaison Officers opened in Carmarthen.

TRADITION

Axe hangs over ancient village fair

Villagers are going to the polls to decide whether a historic 650-year-old fair should be scrapped - because it causes an annual crime-wave.

The 300 residents of the picturesque Pridy, in the Mendips, are fed up with crowds of up to 10,000 people descending on the village every summer. They are holding a referendum to decide whether to abandon the fair which has been held on the village green since the Black Death in the 14th century. Villagers say the event, which for centuries centred on a sheep market, has spiralled out of control, attracting people from all over the country and leading to a spate of thefts, drunkenness and violence every time the fair is held. Village postmaster Jim Finlayson, who has lived at Pridy for 40 years, said: "Last year, somebody stole all the gas cylinders from the village hall and left us with a bill for £500." Villagers have until 31 October to complete their poll forms.

HEALTH

Secret illness of the unhappy worker

Most people who think they are suffering from stress at work are in fact depressed, a psychiatrist claims. Dr David Baldwin, consultant psychiatrist at the Royal South Hampshire Hospital, Southampton, said: "Sometimes people are not well matched to their jobs or have been promoted above a level they feel happy with... or they are frustrated or bored." The symptoms of stress resemble those of depression, and, if left untreated, can lead to a worsening of the problem. The key is to seek help early, he said.

— Jeremy Lawrence
● "Coping with stress at work", an audio programme of DIY strategies produced by the Royal College of Psychiatrists, is available from Talking Life, PO Box 1, Wimbor, L47 7DD, £15.99.

PAPERBACK OUT NOW

Spoonface STEINBERG and other plays

Spoonface STEINBERG

Lee Hall

"Spoonface Steinberg and Other Plays" contains four plays by award-winning writer Lee Hall from the Radio 4 series "God's Country". "Spoonface Steinberg" and "I Love You Jimmy Spud" are also available on cassette.

BBC

Gossip lands Dempster in hot water



A wealthy aristocrat went to the High Court yesterday in a bid to have gossip columnist Nigel Dempster jailed for allegedly repeating a libellous claim that he failed to make proper financial provision for his ex-wife.

Baron Steven Bontnick is also seeking to sequester the assets of Associated Newspapers, the publishers of the *Daily Mail*. He brought contempt proceedings against them over an item which appeared in the newspaper in August which, he claimed, meant he was extremely mean towards his wife Nora (above) at the end of their nine-year marriage. His counsel denied this, saying the baron had made substantial provision for his former wife.

Andrew Caldecott QC, for the newspaper, argued that no breach of its undertaking had occurred. The judge said he would give his ruling on Monday.

7.30 FOR 8



ZITS



IN THE
INDEPENDENT
ON MONDAY

DEBORAH ROSS INTERVIEW

Where's a right
winger to turn when
even the Tories talk
tolerance? To Piers
Paul Read, champion
of family values

MEDIA



Oliver Stone makes
a Natural Born Killer
attack on the
American media

STYLE

Po-faced designer
shops - what's the
alternative?

SPORT

Gerry Francis in the
Tottenham hot seat

Underfunded scientists sell expertise abroad

British scientists are
preparing to sell their
world-beating expertise
abroad, discouraged by
the new Government's
apparent reluctance to
fund research.

The Government says
the money isn't there.
But, says Charles Arthur,
Science Editor, the true
fault lies elsewhere.

David Payne boarded a plane
back from the US yesterday
feeling pleased. He may have
secured the funding for the
University of Southampton's Op-
toelectronics Research Centre
(ORC) to continue its 30 years
of ground-breaking research
into optical systems, now one of
the most important modern
technologies.



Sir Harold Kroto: refused
project funding

Professor Payne's solution is
simple: sell the expertise of
the 120 staff at the ORC to the
University of Connecticut, lock
stock and barrel. Why would he
do that? Because from 1999,
half of the ORC's funding, a
£2m grant from the UK's En-
gineering and Physical Science
Research Council (EPSRC) is
being cut. Only short-term pro-
jects - a couple of years - will
be considered.

As an innovator who has
made many contributions to the
development of fibre-optics,
which can carry thousands of
channels on glass fibres, Pro-
fessor Payne's response might
seem like pique. But he is mak-
ing a scientific choice - between
a country which seems to value
his work, and Britain.

This is not an isolated case.
All over Britain, scientists who
voted in May for Labour (and
many did) in the hope that it
would mean a vote for better
and more long-term funding,
have found that the economic
strictures adopted by the party
leave no room for manoeuvre.
Some are taking direct action,
like Professor Payne.

The EPSRC insists that the
cuts have been planned for
some time, and points out that
the ORC is already receiving
strong industry support, work-
ing with 70 companies.

Professor Payne is less hap-
py, even about the radical so-
lution he is considering. "The
consequence would be that the
intellectual property of any-

thing that we invent and patent
would go overseas," he said yes-
terday. "I don't think the EP-
SRC has thought this through."

Other scientists already
know the feeling. Last year Sir
Harold Kroto, of the Univer-
sity of Sussex, won the Nobel
Prize for Chemistry - hours af-
ter he was turned down by the
EPSRC for funding of a three-
year project into fullerenes,
the molecules which won him
the prize.

Yesterday he said, "I would
like to see the Government ap-
proach the 21st century under-
standing that science is the
dominant culture of this cen-
tury, and will be even more
dominant in the next. You need
to understand it to survive."

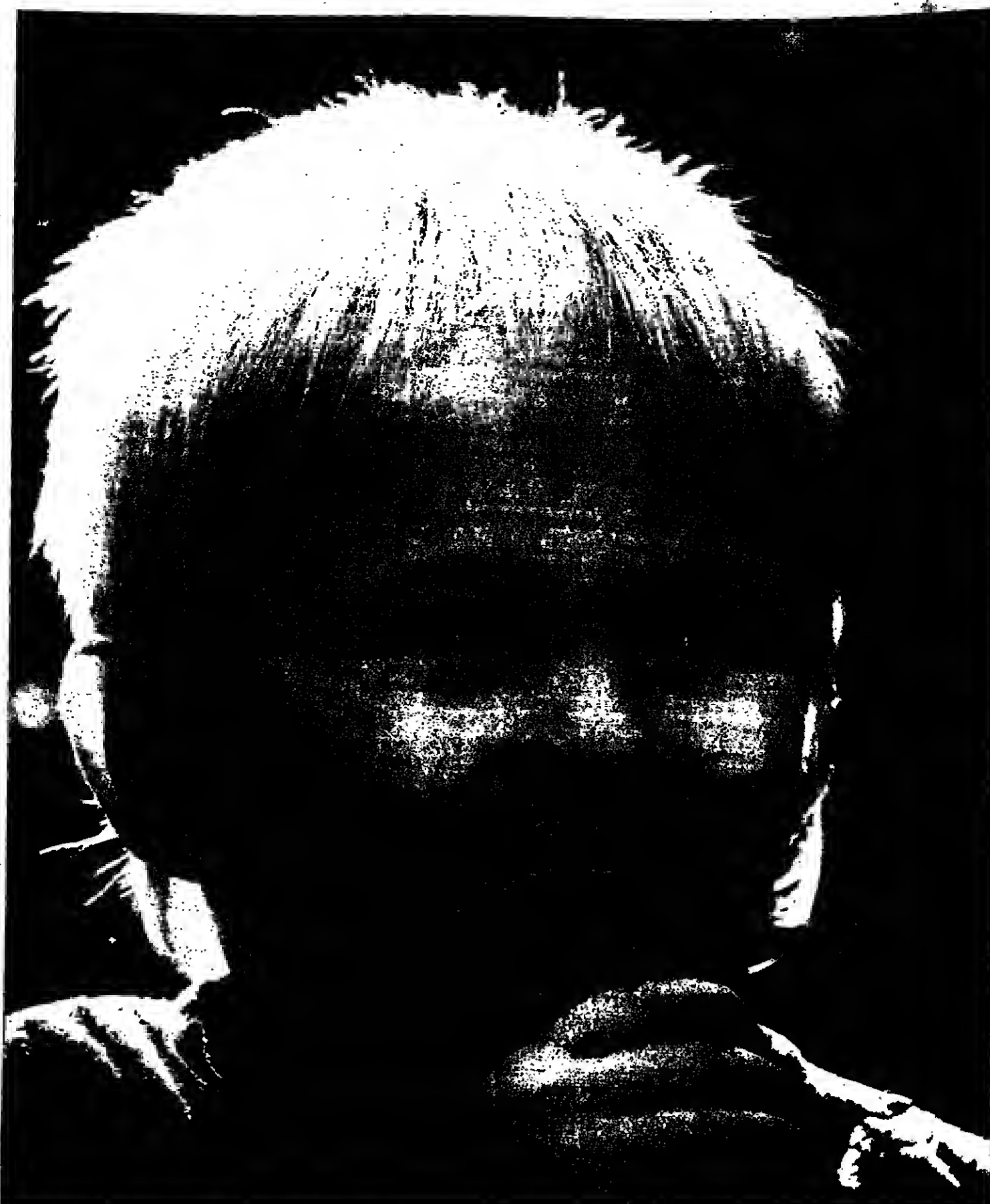
"Anybody who doesn't think
that science and technology have
freed us from the caves should
try a simple experiment. Go
home and turn the electricity off
for a day. See what it's like."

At the core of this debate is
the question: how much should
the Government fund scienti-
fic research? Two definitions
are usually offered for labora-
tory work: "basic" (or "blue-
sky") and "applied". Basic
research asks questions such as
"what would happen if you got
all the atoms in a solid to vibrate
in step?" and produces the
laser. Applied research takes
that and puts it in compact disc
players, missile-aiming systems,
accurate range-finders and new
communications devices. Gen-
erally, people argue that gov-
ernment should fund basic
research, and industry pay for
applied research.

But the nature of science
means that basic research is
published and available world-
wide. Firms in other countries
can apply concepts developed
by British scientists with British
taxpayers' money. In fact, a
Japanese government study
found that more than half of the
concepts and discoveries that its
companies were exploiting had
originated in the UK.

So should the Government
abandon basic research fund-
ing? Today John Battle, the in-
dustry minister with
responsibility for science and
technology, is meeting the pres-
sure group Save British Science
in Leeds. Denis Noble, SBS's
secretary, said: "We are specifi-
cally going to follow up on a
comment he made last week
that he is 'very worried whether
there will be enough seedcorn
for the future'. The first issue is
how he's going to deliver on
that." Mr Battle has made what
scientists regard as encouraging
noises about funding. But they
prefer to judge on actions.

Sir Harold points out that
the lesson to be drawn from the
Japanese study is not quite
what it seems. "It suggests that
we're doing really well at pro-
ducing and funding basic re-
search here," he said. "But it
points the finger at industry.
Why isn't industry taking up
these ideas?"



Sweet words: The ingredients of British chocolate face criticism in Europe that may result in bars of the confectionery being labelled 'chocolate with a high milk content'. Unfortunately, in France, this means 'household chocolate' Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

All because the lady loves vegetable fat...

Britain's chocolate is
under threat from rival
confectioners on the
Continent who argue
that our product is not
pure enough to merit
the name. As the British
scored an important
victory this week,
Amanda Kelly tries to
discover what makes a
'real' bar of chocolate.

The last thing on the minds of
most chocoholics as they bite
into their favourite brand is the
exact percentage and make-up
of the ingredients. But it seems
unlikely they would be so keen
on "vegetate".

At the heart of the debate re-
volving around a proposed
"Chocolate Directive" lies the
question of when a bar of
chocolate stops being a bar of
chocolate and becomes some-
thing else.

While Britain and six other
European Union countries per-
mit up to 5 per cent vegetable
fat, the rest of the EU requires
chocolate to be made with co-
coa butter. Purists argue that the
use of vegetable fat means the
product is not really chocolate
and they say the lower content
of cocoa in British chocolate
makes it inferior. The makers
of British chocolate say these ar-
guments are "ridiculous".

Cadbury's spokesman Tony
Bisberrough said: "Simply
putting more cocoa into choco-
late doesn't make it any more

chocolate. It just makes it dif-
ferent. And the reason why we
use vegetable fat is to give it a
nice gloss and a nice snap when
you break off your chunk of
chocolate."

This week the European
Parliament environment com-
mittee rejected calls from Euro
MPs to make British confec-
tioners change the name of
their product. They also re-
jected demands that British choco-
late be called "chocolate with
vegetable fat". But, as they vot-
ed on European Commission
proposals to streamline EU
food laws in the interests of the
single market, they recom-
mended that bars such as Cad-
bury's Dairy Milk should be
labelled "chocolate with a high
milk content".

Paul Kirkwood, spokesman
for Nestlé Rowntree said: "We
are very pleased to be able to
continue calling it chocolate
because that is what it is ...
British chocolate is every bit as
good as on the Continent."

The matter will be taken up
again in a full session of the
parliament, on 22 October, when
ministers will try to resolve
their divisions.

John Newman, director of
the Biscuit, Cake, Chocolate
and Confectionery Alliance,
said: "We are hoping that the
European parliament will reject
the proposal that we should la-
bel all milk chocolate 'chocolate
with a high milk content'. One
of the main problems with this
that when the phrase is trans-
lated into French it means
'household chocolate'."

WHAT'S IN A BAR OF CHOCOLATE?

Fresh liquid full-cream milk.
Sugar.
Cocoa mass - the basis of all chocolate products, consisting of
roasted cocoa beans that have been ground into liquid.
Cocoa butter - the fat from cocoa beans.
Vegetable fat - similar in nature to cocoa butter and coming
from African shea, Indian sal and Malaysian palm.
Emulsifier - a liquid made from rape seed oil that helps to liquify
the chocolate.
E402 - ammonium phosphatides which act as a stabilizer.
Flavourings - such as vanilla, are added to enhance the taste.

The real trouble with funding

The trouble with science fund-
ing in Britain doesn't lie with sci-
entists, or the Government.
Earlier this week Microsoft an-
nounced more funding for the
brightest minds of Cambridge
University, and the Canadian
telecoms company Nortel an-
nounced the fruits of the work
of Ian Vance - a Briton who has
figured out how to send Inter-
net communications over mains
electric cables.

A Southampton scientist
prepares to move his centre to
Connecticut to keep it going.
Cambridge-based Imutran,
which is developing a way to
produce pig organs to transplant
into humans, has to seek ven-
ture capital funding from the
US. Britain is full of scientists
who are keen to make discov-
eries that will shake the world,
and make their fortunes. But
these bright sparks face enor-

mous problems setting light to
British industry. After two re-
cessions, British companies are
distrustful of science (and, to
some extent, technology), ruled
by accountants, and firmly fixed
on the short term.

Industry complains that the
pressure for profits is too great
to fund long-term work. But
wool-gathering turned out nice-
ly for the scientists at the Roslin
Institute and PPL Therapeutics,
who produced Dolly the cloned
sheep earlier this year. The
Labour message is, surpris-
ingly, correct: industry should
take up where a government
corseted by untaxable voters
cannot. Industry should start
paying for scientific research,
and smile. Because Bill Gates
has to have a successor as rich-
est person in the world. Why
shouldn't he or she be British?
- Charles Arthur

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Third expert casts doubt on nanny case

For the second day running, medical experts have given evidence which contradicts the prosecution case against Louise Woodward, the British nanny accused of murdering her young American charge.

The massive brain injuries from which baby Matthew Eappen died could have been caused up to two days before he was allegedly murdered by the nanny Louise Woodward, a pathologist told her trial in the United States yesterday.

Dr Umberto De Girolmi was the third prosecution medical witness to admit that the nine-month-old baby's brain haemorrhage could have been suffered before the day he was admitted to Boston Children's Hospital in an irreversible coma.

The doctor also said there was too much brain damage to find evidence to support the prosecution's claim that the baby had been shaken violently before he died.

A consultant neuropathologist, Dr De Girolmi had looked for signs of old injury or disease when he microscopically examined the baby's brain, he told the Middlesex Superior Court in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

He had found none - but it was impossible to be more precise about when the fatal injury happened other than that it was within a week of Matthew's death.

"The changes to the brain were within a week, they are not older than a week," said the doctor.

The baby died five days after his admission to hospital on 4 February this year.

The defence claims his brain injury could have happened earlier and gone undetected before it started re-bleeding either spontaneously or because of mild jarring.

Dr De Girolmi told defence lawyer Barry Scheck that the injury could date back to February 2 - two days before Miss Woodward, 19, called emergency services in panic to say Matthew was barely breathing.

The prosecution alleges that Woodward, of Elton, near Chester, shook him violently and slammed his head against a hard surface in a bitter, frustrated rage because of his crying and her unhappiness with her job with his parents Deb-



Louise Woodward: Injuries may have been caused two days before

orah and Sunil Eappen in Newton, near Boston.

Woodward denies first degree murder which carries a sentence of life without parole.

The pathologist who carried out the post-mortem examination on Matthew said yesterday he did not believe the baby had been violently shaken because of the lack of haemorrhage in the neck muscles and the fact there were no bruises on his neck and ribs to show he had been grabbed.

Mr Scheck asked Dr De Girolmi whether too much of the brain had been destroyed to find the shearing of the brain tissue which would indicate shaking.

The pathologist replied: "I agree with you."

Shortly before the start of yesterday's hearing Woodward was in tears in the courtroom.

She had to be comforted by her defence lawyers but quickly regained her composure before the start of the proceedings.

England fans arrive in Rome amid tight security

A tight but low-key security ring greeted the first several hundred England football fans to arrive in Rome for today's decisive World Cup match against Italy. With Italian police on full alert, backed by British colleagues from the National Criminal Intelligence Service, the first waves of flights and trains passed off without incident yesterday.

Fans arriving at Ciampino airport had their bags meticulously searched, causing some delays when charter planes arrived close together and provoking some mutters of irritation. From there, there were specially laid-on taxis to take the fans to their hotels.

Smaller clusters of fans turned up at Termini, Rome's main railway station. Many of them had accommodation arranged nearby and spent the afternoon sitting quietly in the neighbourhood's rather dingy bars. No major problems were reported. The one concern focused on fans buying tickets for areas of the Olympic Stadium where Italian fans will be sitting.

— Andrew Gumbel

'Canberra' will be scrapped

The much-loved cruise liner Canberra is to end her life in a scrapyard in Pakistan, it was announced yesterday. The 45,000-tonne vessel, which was used as a troop-carrying ship in the Falklands campaign, left Southampton last night for Pakistan, P&O Cruises said.

Launched in 1961, Canberra completed her final 20-night Mediterranean cruise voyage on 30 September ending a career which saw her sail about three million miles and carry one million passengers.

Son freed over mercy killing

A devoted son who helped his elderly mother commit suicide to end her life of pain walked free from court yesterday.

Peter Pitman, 46, was initially charged with murder after the body of his 75-year-old mother Janet Pitman was found in a field with a gunshot wound to the head.

Pitman, a farmworker, denied murder and was given a nine-month prison sentence suspended for two years after pleading guilty to aiding and abetting his mother's suicide in a mercy killing.

Bristol Crown Court heard how Mrs Pitman had endured 40 years of agony after being struck down with arthritis. She moved to live with her son at Charlton Mackrell, Somerset, 15 years ago but continued to suffer from the crippling disease. The court was told Mrs Pitman was determined to kill herself because of her poor quality of life and had been screaming with pain the night before her death.

Dickinson DNA tests extended

Police yesterday began taking genetic samples from 170 French villagers as part of the 15-month hunt for the killer of British schoolgirl Caroline Dickinson.

She was raped and murdered in a shared dormitory in a youth hostel in the Brittany village of Pleine Fougères while on a trip with Launceston community college, Cornwall.

French investigators began DNA-testing males aged between 15 and 35 on a voluntary basis in the village where Caroline was killed in July last year. John Dickinson, her father, who has fought since Caroline's death for a more thorough approach to police inquiries, welcomed the move. He said: "This is something I have campaigned for very hard and I think it is a very important avenue to be gone down. If it does not lead to Caroline's killer being found, then we will try other avenues."

Blair sets out his plans for Bill of Rights

Historic legislation giving British citizens a bill of rights will be put before the House of Commons by the end of the month.

Katherine Butler reports from Strasbourg.

In Strasbourg for a gathering of 40 European leaders, including the Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Germany's Helmut Kohl, Mr Blair committed the Government to early incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights into British law. He promised a White Paper setting out the mechanics of this move in 10 days' time and publication of a Bill shortly afterwards.

The move, importing a vast body of European human rights case law directly into British law, should give individuals easier access to arbitration.

British rather than European judges will be entitled to rule on whether a person's fundamental rights under the European Convention - the right to life, to privacy and to

a fair trial, for example - have been violated and citizens will no longer have to take their challenges directly to Strasbourg, where the Human Rights court sits.

"I want the British people to be able to secure their human rights, not only from the European Court but also at home from their own judges. They should not have to go through the lengthy and often expensive process of appealing direct to the Commission and Court here in Strasbourg," said Mr Blair.

Britain was one of the founders of the Council of Europe and signed the Human Rights Convention in 1950, but the failure to enshrine its provisions in domestic law has meant that British cases appear before the Strasbourg court more than any others and Britons have generated the court's most high-profile rulings. In the 1970s it forced the criminalisation of homosexuality in Northern Ireland to be overturned, and outlawed birching in the Isle of Man. A ruling in a case brought by two Scottish teachers in 1982 led to the ending of corporal punishment in British schools and in

1995 the court condemned the British army for the "death on the rock" killings of three IRA suspects in Gibraltar.

Reforms to the European Court launched by leaders yesterday will speed the procedure and cut the waiting time for rulings, which can take up to three years. A single court will sit in permanent session from next year, assessing applications, and the present two-tier structure will be scrapped. British citizens will still be able to appeal to the Strasbourg judges.

Mr Blair also gave Britain's backing yesterday to a declaration committing governments to move towards the abolition of the death penalty. Officials stressed that a decision on abolishing capital punishment, still technically on the statute books for treason, still lay in the hands of parliament.

Mr Blair joined 39 European leaders in signing a commitment to ban human cloning. Chancellor Kohl also committed Germany to a national ban. "Looking back to a dark page of our history where barbarity ruled during the Nazi period, Germans take this issue very seriously," he said.

Killer's transfer to Ulster jail to be reviewed

The controversial decision to transfer convicted killer Jason Campbell from Scotland to the Maze prison in Northern Ireland is to be reviewed by the Secretary of State for Scotland, Donald Dewar.

Campbell, a Protestant whose father was convicted of planting a bomb in two Roman Catholic pubs in Glasgow, was jailed for life for the murder of 16-year-old Mark Scott as he made his way home from a football match in the city in 1993. Mark, who was wearing a Celtic top, had his throat slashed in an apparently random attack.

In a radio interview, Mr

Dewar said he wanted to be satisfied that the proper criteria for Campbell's transfer had been met before it took place. He insisted that the final decision on the move rested with him, not with his home affairs minister, Henry McLeish, who has found himself at the centre of the growing row. Mr Dewar told BBC Radio Scotland: "This is a very tragic and very difficult and very complex case."

The move comes following a storm of political protest and criticism. Mr Dewar said he did not want to prejudice the case as it had to be decided on the evidence and the facts.

Michael Ancram, the former Northern Ireland Minister, criticised the Government's handling of the case and said it might put a question mark over Mr McLeish's future. "It's quite astounding that a transfer of this sort in a very sensitive area has taken place without the Secretary of State knowing the full facts."

The loyalist politician whose party requested the transfer on behalf of the UVF paramilitaries said today that he had made mistakes. Progressive Unionist Party leader David Ervine said: "He (Jason Campbell) is not a political prisoner."

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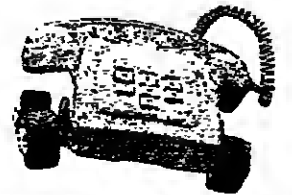
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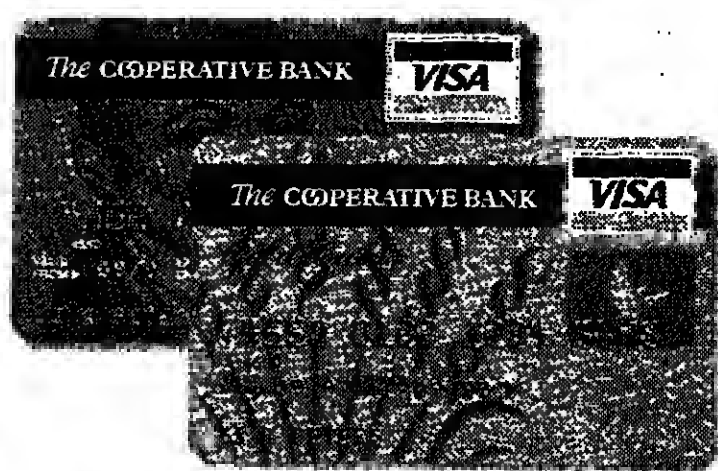
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Note of discord as pop stars sing in tune with politics

The British music industry is endangering itself by cosying up to the Government according to former rock star and agit-prop artist Bill Drummond. Paul McCann asks if there are really no more rebels any more.

It is difficult to imagine the Special AKA singing "Stand Down Tony" or Elvis Costello wanting to "tramp the dirt down" on this Prime Minister's grave as he did with Mrs Thatcher.

In fact it is so difficult to imagine a rock 'n' roll opposition to a Prime Minister who has Noel Gallagher round for drinks that one erstwhile rock star has called for a halt on the music industry's pally attitude to Labour.

Bill Drummond, part of the art pranksters, the K Foundation, formerly known as the groups Justified Ancients of Mu Mu and the KLF, has attacked Alan McGee, head of Oasis's record company, Creation, for joining the Government's task force on the arts.

"I'm getting very frightened," Drummond said yesterday. "It seems that the

establishment has pulled the arts to its bosom, but it is the job of the arts to stand outside the establishment. As soon as you start becoming part of the PR of a government you are getting into a dangerous area."

Mr McGee maintained on the BBC's *Today* programme that he was not a rebel which is why he is on the Government's Arts Task Force: "It's to make it easier for people in the industry," he said. "The management of bands is currently very inexperienced, there is no training. With government assistance the music industry can be juicier."

The Government has dedicated itself to assisting the "creative" industries such as film, music and design, which it sees as areas of future economic growth. It even sent a minister, Mark Fisher, to the muddy fields of Glastonbury this year to address the audience waiting for The Prodigy.

But Drummond is concerned that rock music will be damaged by government intervention and that opposition to the Government will be limited: "At the moment there is no cultural opposition."

Despite a proud history of a musical opposition to the ruling establishment, going back to Bob Dylan's protest songs,

the trend has petered out since the street-fighting days of high Thatcherism.

From the class war of The Jam's "Eton Rifles" to UB40 singing "I am a One to Ten", every band worth their salt in the Eighties lined up to oppose the government of the day. Even Bruce Springsteen sang Woody Guthrie's "This Land is Your Land", anthem of the International Trade Union Movement, in stadia full of Reagan-voting yuppies. In the Nineties, opposition rock has been championed by anarchy-chic bands like The Levellers, with their support for environmental causes such as the Newbury bypass protests.

For Drummond, who's oppositional antics have included taking a dead sheep to the Brit awards, hijacking the Turner Prize and burning £1m of his own money, believes the rock world's fraternisation with Labour in opposition should stop now it is in power.

He is taking a stand against Labour by setting up a campaign to "F**k the Millennium". The K Foundation took out advertisements in the national press this week to ask people to phone in and say whether they want the K Foundation to "F**k the Millennium". How he plans to carry this out is not known.



Schmoozing: Liam Gallagher, of Oasis, and his wife Meg get together with Tony Blair over drinks at No 10 in July

Photograph: PA

The MP who didn't inhale

Just because she went into a coffee shop it doesn't mean she inhaled. That was the message yesterday from Ann Taylor's office, after it emerged that the Leader of the Commons had popped in to one of Amsterdam's infamous establishments where Moroccan black is as readily available as café latte.

"People seem to be taking two and two and making five," said a spokeswoman for Ms Taylor, after details of the visit emerged. "This should not be seen as an indication that the Government is going to legalise cannabis."

Indeed it shouldn't. The visit to Amsterdam, earlier this week, was part of a three-day fact-finding mission to Hol-

land and France, intended to familiarise Ms Taylor with the drugs policies of other countries. As chair of the Cabinet sub-committee on drug misuse, she has travelled far and wide to gather information.

No details were forthcoming as to which coffee shop proprietor played host and officials refused to say what was discussed or - perhaps - handled. "It was a private visit. The minister simply wanted to familiarise herself with the issues," said the spokeswoman.

It was a surreal end to a week in which Lord Bingham, the Lord Chief Justice had expressed support for "detached, objective, independent consideration of de-

criminalisation" of soft drugs. And it followed on the heels of expressions of determination by Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, that he would never bow to pressure to let up on the fight against drugs.

However, Frank Dobson, the Secretary of State for Health told a television studio audience on Thursday night that he would consider making cannabis legal for sufferers of multiple sclerosis, making it available on prescription on medical grounds.

Next week ministers are expected to announce the name of the person chosen to be the new "drugs tsar" who will co-ordinate efforts across Whitehall to combat drug abuse.

— Steve Boggan

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Six Army officers accused of gang-raping a 24-year-old woman walked free from court after their trial was halted yesterday. A judge at Oxford Crown Court decided there was not enough consistent evidence to convict the men, and directed the jury to return verdicts of "not guilty".

The six — captains Philip Bates, 26, Darren Bartlett, 24, and Ian Barlow, 29, Lieutenant Matthew Rippling, 24, and officer cadets Nicholas Oettinger, 20, and Andrew Stout, 20 — had denied raping the woman at the Royal Military College of Science in Shrivenham, Oxfordshire, on 27 May last year.

The jury at Oxford Crown Court had heard that the woman, who cannot be named for legal reasons, claimed the men assaulted her in a bedroom at the college after a drunken day out at a nearby fête. The officers said she had consented to having sex.

The following day the men sent the woman a bunch of flowers with the message "Sorry about the misunder-

standing. Please accept apologies from all involved."

During the trial a friend of the victim told the jury that she had twice spoken with her on the telephone in the week leading up to the alleged assault. The friend said she was pestered to join in a group sex session with the woman and a group of Army officers.

The court also heard that 10 days before the alleged attack, the woman had had sex with Oettinger and another man at the college while Bates lay beside them in a drunken stupor.

When the woman reported the alleged rape to police six months later, she failed to mention the earlier group sex session. She also failed to tell police that she had had sex with another of the men, Stout, just hours before the alleged rape.

Judge Julian Hall decided that inconsistencies in her evidence made it unsafe to allow a jury to reach verdicts.

He said the defence's attacks on the woman at the centre of the case were

not "attacks on her morals or on her way of life, they are attacks on her credibility or reliability as a witness in this case". He was conscious that it was normally for the jury to decide the facts of the case, but he had acted as a filter in this case to ensure a fair trial. However, he added, "If six men think it's a good idea to have sex with one woman, they run the risk of being accused of rape. I think they have brought this prosecution on themselves."

He said the six realised they had gone too far after the girl was obviously upset - the episode was "almost bound to end in tears". The judge went on: "It was ill thought through by everybody and it does no one any credit."

He ordered that the six men's costs should be paid in full.

A spokeswoman for the Army said: "The Army authorities will now consider what action would be appropriate. Until that consideration is complete we are unable to comment."

Strict vetting measures to prevent corrupt and second-rate police officers joining the new National Crime Squad are to be introduced, the head of the force revealed yesterday.

Roy Penrose, director-general of the squad, which comes into power in April with a workforce of about 1,700, is concerned that because his new team will be dealing with top-level criminals and offences involving huge sums of money it could act as a honey pot to corrupt officers.

As the current co-ordinator of the regional crime squads, Mr Penrose said that he was aware of former officers offering bribes to serving detectives for help and information and of some forces giving exaggerated recommendations to get rid of incompetent staff. "There are some very ingenious officers and criminals," he warned.

He said that to try to weed out any officers intent on wrong doing he would be using a number of measures, including double checking some references, having a tougher vetting procedure for all recruits, and installing a confidential telephone system to enable officers to inform anonymously on suspected colleagues.

He said that he would be "ruthless" in throwing out any police officers who did not meet the highest of standards.

The problem of corruption was highlighted last year in the case of John Donald, a senior Metropolitan police drugs squad detective seconded to the south-east regional crime squad, who was jailed for 11 years for selling information to criminals.

The National Crime Squad, which has a budget of £95m and is made up of the old regional crime squads, will work alongside the National Criminal Intelligence Service in targeting the country's most senior gangsters.

Mr Penrose said the lack of officers from ethnic backgrounds made it hard to infiltrate some of the criminal gangs, such as Jamaican "yardies", Chinese Triads, Turkish heroin families based in London, and Russian money launderers.

— *Jason Bennett,
Crime Correspondent*

Elizabeth Barran Browning has been hailed as the writer of the finest love poem in the English language for her heartfelt sonnet which begins "How do I love thee? Let me count the ways." "How Do I Love Thee", which the Victorian poet wrote for her husband and fellow poet Robert Browning, with whom she eloped at the age of 40, was "a clear winner" of the Nation's Favourite Love Poem voted by BBC1 viewers ahead of works by Shakespeare, Yeats, Robert Burns and others. Programme editor Daisy Goodwin said she was "delighted but not surprised". "When it comes to love, women are streets ahead, poetically at least!"

It is the second year that a woman has topped the annual BBC1 *Bookworm* poetry poll, which follows celebrations for National Poetry Day on Thursday. Last year's award for the favourite post-war poem was won by Jenny Joseph's "Warning".

More than half a million pounds is needed to turn back the River Medway River in Kent and save the 13th-century Aylesford Priory - one of county's oldest buildings, home to a community of working Carmelite friars and once a hospice for pilgrims on their way to the shrine of St Thomas a Becket in Canterbury. Rising river and tide levels risk a unique part of Britain's heritage being swept away. The outside walls of the priory's Pilgrim's Hall form part of the flood defences. But they are bulging outwards and are in urgent need of repair. The Environment Agency has drawn up plans for a £573,000 scheme to strengthen the walls and raise embankments. It is hoped lottery money will be provided for other vital restoration work.

- Stephen Goodwin

Two plant hire companies were ordered to pay £500,000 in fines, and costs following a road crash in which the arm of a digger caused a low loader swung out and killed five people in an approaching car in December 1995. Bazley Plant Hire Ltd of St Columb, Cornwall, and Chepstow Plant Hire Ltd of Gwent were found guilty at Truro Crown Court of failing to ensure the vehicle was not a risk to safety. They employed the driver of the low loader, Mark Wade, 31, of Fraddon, Cornwall, who was found guilty of causing the deaths of five people by dangerous driving. Judge Graham Cottle adjourned sentence on Wade.

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7/RACING MYSTERY

THE INDEPENDENT
SATURDAY
11 OCTOBER 1997

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Echoes of Dick Francis as arsonist stalks Newmarket



Racing uncertainty: Newmarket's close-knit community has drawn close in the face of a succession of unrelated incursions from the world of drugs and violence

Photograph: Robert Hallam

An arsonist is believed to be stalking the stables of some of Britain's most expensive racehorses.

It is the latest drama to grip the racing community in Newmarket where, Ian Burrell reports, police have recently been called to investigate armed robbery, drugs smuggling and murder.

As the siren from the first fire engine cut through the Suffolk night air, Luca Cumani was already in the stable yard leading his horses away from the flames of the burning building. One of Britain's leading trainers, he has been entrusted with the care of horses owned by some of the world's richest men; Sheikh Mohammed, the Aga Khan, Michael Tabor.

It was nearly 2.30am when he received a telephone call from a neighbour, telling him that the stable buildings at his Kremlin Stud Yard were ablaze. But Mr Cumani might have been forgiven for sleeping with one eye open. Only 17 hours earlier another fire had mysteriously broken out at his neighbouring stables at Bedford House, causing severe damage.

Not only was Mr Cumani the victim in

both instances, but also each blaze began in similar circumstances, in the second-storey lofts of the stables.

Police were last night questioning a 28-year-old man in connection with the fires.

Meanwhile fire officers warned the Newmarket racing community to step up security amid fears of further attacks.

Divisional fire officer Michael Jackson said: "They should make sure they know who is coming in and out of their yards and make sure they establish a routine. It is very difficult to protect properties like stables because of the way they are laid out, but owners must be on their guard."

Much-loved in the racing fraternity, Italian-born Mr Cumani, 48, is known for being a mentor to Frankie Dettori, the country's outstanding flat racing jockey. The

trainer has been based in Newmarket for more than 20 years and the pinnacle of his career so far was his Derby win with Kahyasi in 1988.

The first fire was started when the racehorses were on the gallops and the remaining four horses were quickly led to safety.

But yesterday's attack was on a stable housing a dozen racehorses, which narrowly escaped as flames ripped through the roof of the building.

After yesterday's fire, Mr Cumani said: "We led the horses into the other yards, by which time the firemen had got the fire under control. Thank God no staff or horses were injured in either blaze."

He praised other leading trainers, Sean Woods, William Haggas and William

Jarvis, who rushed to the scene to give help. Their reactions were unsurprising given that the Newmarket racing community has drawn closer together in recent months in the face of a succession of unwanted, though probably unrelated, incursions from the worlds of drugs and violence.

Earlier this summer, Kamil Mahdi, 48, a new trainer on the Newmarket scene, was the victim of a violent armed robbery at his yard.

Mr Mahdi, along with his fiancée and a business associate, were tied up and threatened with a handgun by two smartly-dressed men posing as racehorse owners. The men escaped with jewellery and cash worth £2,000.

In July, Roger Harris, another Newmarket-based trainer, and two other men,

were arrested after customs officials seized cannabis resin worth £3.5m in a horsebox. And the town has still not recovered from the murder of trainer Alex Scott, 34, who was shot in the back during an argument with an employee at his stable yard.

The murder trial at Norwich Crown Court in 1995, at which stud groom William "Clem" O'Brien, 58, was jailed for life, gave an insight into the simmering tensions which sometimes exist behind the serene public image of the sport of kings. The jury heard that he opened fire on the millionaire trainer, shouting: "This is for you, you bastard."

Yesterday as Mr Cumani prepared his horses for a meeting at Ascot, detectives were seeking to establish whether anyone might have a grudge against him.

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Scots lose out in football monopoly

The toy maker Waddingtons courted controversy on the eve of the weekend's decisive World Cup qualifying matches by consigning Scotland to the cheapest property in a footballing remake of Monopoly.

Scotland are almost certain to make the finals if they beat Latvia at Parkhead tomorrow.

But a new World Cup France 98 Edition of the London property game puts the Scots on the lowest-ranking square on the board, on a par with Switzerland and below Romania.

While Brazil are top dogs on swanky Mayfair and England enjoy expensive Regent Street, Scotland languish on Old Kent Road - traditionally one of the shabbier streets in London.

The Scottish football legend Denis Law was outraged by the move. He said: "We have done extremely well. We will still qualify again and considering the size of the country that is not bad going. We should do better than the Old Kent Road."

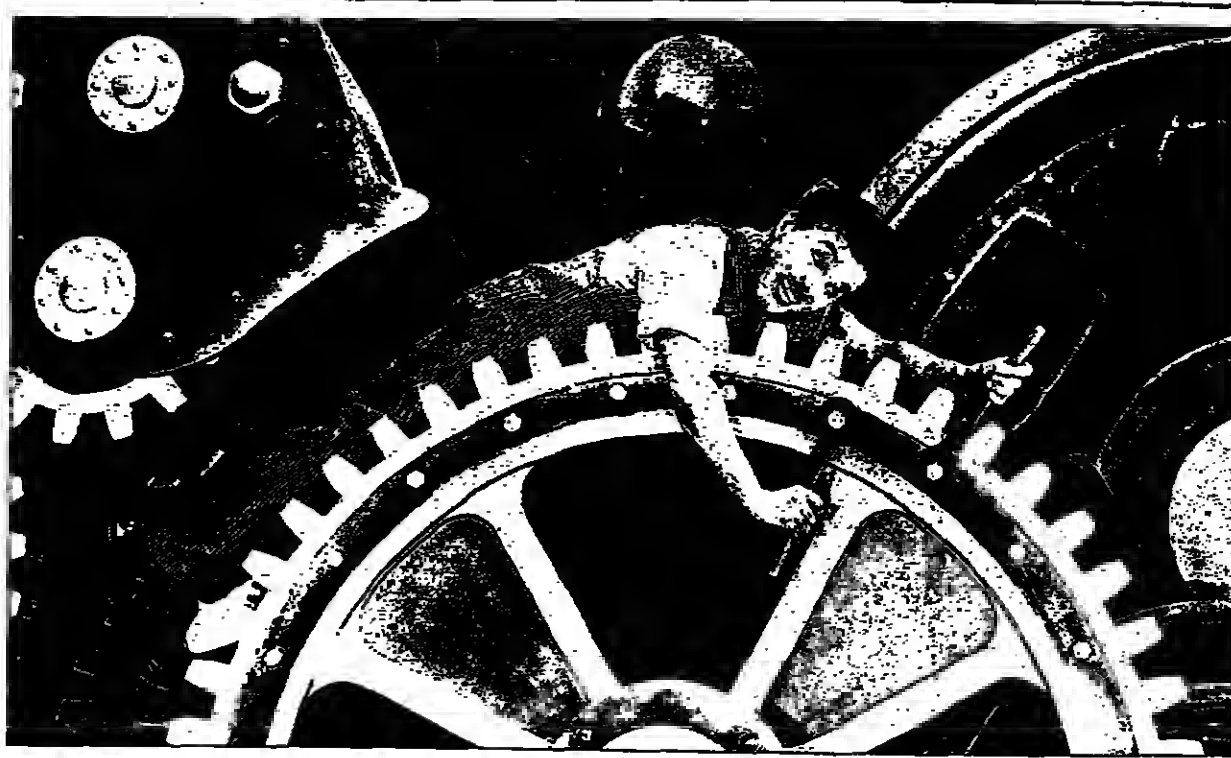
Chaplin family refuse to be made Charlies over the euro

What does Charlie Chaplin make you think of? Comic calamities, an unsteady gait, a bumbling persona - perhaps the qualities of an ideal candidate to promote the European currency. But, as Clare Gerner heard, his family have reservations.

Plans are afoot to employ the late Sir Charlie Chaplin to carry the world into the 21st century by extolling the virtues of European monetarism.

A French advertising company believes that the Little Tramp's silent humour will be the perfect way to promote the birth of the euro for a project sponsored by the European Parliament. But though four of Chaplin's eight children voted in favour, three were against and one abstained.

Christopher Chaplin, 35, the youngest, who lives in London, cannot hear the



Spanner in the works: Some of Chaplin's family are opposing the use of his memory to sell the euro

prospect of his father's creation being put to such use. "God help us if it catches on," he exclaimed yesterday. "Imagine Budget Day, or the announcement of another interest rate rise from the Bank of England. Up pops that 'little fellow' we will have come to hate and dread."

He also worries about what such a campaign would say about society. "How stupid

have we become," he asks, if every piece of mildly complicated legislation needs to be explained by the "silly sweet animated figures of our best known heroes?"

But Egon Ellenberg, of FRI Communications in Paris, can think of no one better than Charlie Chaplin to put across the Eurocurrency message. "He's from nowhere and he's from everywhere."

Mr Ellenberg hopes to make a series of 15 animated films, each 26 minutes in length and representing a different European country. The cost would be \$7m, paid for by the European Parliament. The actors Peter Ustinov and Sophia Loren have agreed to do the voice-overs, to "translate between the man in the street, ie Charlie Chaplin, and the Establishment". Although

he has a majority vote from the family, he must wait until 1 January for the final go-ahead. As the stream of requests continues - a Chaplin cartoon and a Chaplin theme park are already in the pipeline - Christopher Chaplin will try to be faithful to his father's memory. "I feel we should concentrate on safeguarding the films. It's quite a heritage... We should treat it carefully."

Children left at risk of abuse

Ministers have summoned leaders of a local council after a report revealed nearly 200 children were being left at risk of abuse. Glenda Cooper, Social Affairs Correspondent, examines concerns that Sefton council has failed its most vulnerable residents.

"Misdirected" resources and "inadequate" services have left both children and the elderly at risk, according to a major review into Sefton social services by the Audit Commission and the Social Services Inspectorate.

Nearly 200 children in urgent need of help and protection did not have a social worker and had not had a care plan drawn up. Children's homes in the Merseyside borough were also not being inspected as regularly as they should be, the review found.

Old people were also being put at risk - eight of the council's homes for the elderly did not meet health and safety standards. Nearly 300 assessed as first-priority cases were waiting for assessments or services.

The review estimated that it would take at least £2.5m to bring the homes up to scratch. At the same time they were dogged by high costs. While pri-

vately run or voluntary homes cost on average £176 per week, Sefton's were costing £237 per week. The council could save around £2m, it was calculated.

This is not the first time Sefton has come under fire. Earlier this week, Age Concern accused the council of acting like a bully by refusing to help with residential care until an old person has less than £1,500 - the price of a funeral.

The joint commission has carried out reports on 10 authorities. "This is the first report... where the local authority is not serving well the needs of the local community," Sir Herbert Laming, chief inspector of the SSI, said. "Resources are being misdirected and services are inadequate. Social services have little prospect of being retained unless the council's leadership takes robust and swift action."

The health minister, Paul Boateng said that he has insisted council leaders see him next week with an action plan. If they fail to come up with an effective strategy the Government has the power to impose someone on the department.

Steve Wilds, Sefton's newly appointed director of social services welcomed the report. "It gives a clear agenda for the way forward," he said. "I am optimistic about the future. I believe the people of Sefton can look forward to the services they rightly deserve from Sefton's Social Services Department."

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National Front election candidate is jailed

A former National Front by-election candidate who planned to "tear down the fabric of society" with a "vile and evil" racist magazine responsible for a hate campaign against Frank Bruno's mother, was jailed for 18 months yesterday.

Robin Gray, 35, was caught with hundreds of copies of *Stormer*, a publication produced by the far-right Combat 18 group.

The boxer Frank Bruno's mother, Lynette, received death threats and was forced to move house after her address and telephone number were published. The £1.50 periodical, which preaches violence and death towards Jews, blacks and left-wingers, has carried similar details about other high-profile personalities. Among them are the Liberal Democrat leader Paddy Ashdown, the news-caster Anna Ford, the actress Vanessa Redgrave and Paul Ince, the Manchester United footballer.

And among photographs of former Third Reich leaders were instructions for making lethal car bombs.

Sentencing Gray at Southwark Crown Court, Judge George Bathurst-Norman told him: "In nearly 37 years in the law I thought I had seen everything - but I have never seen material like this, so designed to stir up hatred against individuals and against groups."

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THE INDEPENDENT
SATURDAY
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Immigration rules to cover same-sex couples

The Government yesterday announced that it was changing the immigration rules relating to unmarried couples - including same-sex couples. Immigration minister Mike O'Brien said that the rules Labour had inherited from the previous government were "unsustainable and may have breached human rights law".

A new concession relating to admitting partners in common law and same-sex relationships will take effect from Monday. But Mr O'Brien said the criteria applied to them would be "much tighter than for those who can marry", thus retaining the "special position of marriage".

Under the new rules, a couple will have to show that they have been living together for four years or more and intend to continue to live together permanently. Once admitted, they will have to show that the relationship has continued for a further year before being allowed to settle in the United Kingdom.

In a statement, Mr O'Brien said Labour had always supported the fundamental principle of immigration rules, that someone already settled in the UK - such as a British citizen - could bring their spouse to join them, provided they met tests on the genuineness of the marriage and financial self-sufficiency.

To ensure good administration of the immigration system, "legal marriage must be the key to entry for the partner who is not British or not settled here", said Mr O'Brien. However, some couples were barred by law from marrying, either because one partner could not remarry or because they were of the same sex.

The new proposals were criticised by former Tory Home Office minister Lord Widdecombe, who said: "It undermines marriage and secondly it undermines immigration control. So the Labour Party have managed to deal a severe blow at both in one fell swoop."



A bar in Canal Street, the heart of the Manchester gay scene, where the success of the annual Manchester Mardi Gras has been blamed for attracting inquisitive heterosexual customers to the area. Photograph: Rob Bodman/NTI

Manchester club scene turns against heteros

The bars and clubs of the Canal Street area in Manchester, feeling threatened by the popularity of gay culture among the North-west's revellers, are turning straight men and women away.

Paul McCann asks if this is heterophobia or positive discrimination.

The attempt by the Conservative Party to reposition itself as gay-friendly is probably the last piece of news the Manchester gay village needs.

Bars and clubs have started turning away straight customers in what some have described as wave of "heterophobia", but which the clubs see as essential to the survival of the gay community, according to a documentary to be screened by Channel 5 tomorrow night.

Clubs like the Paradise Factory and Poptastic, and bars like Manto now employ drag queens and gay doormen to decide whether customers trying to gain entry really are gay.

"We're not anti-straight," says Andrew O'Dwyer, manager of the Paradise Factory, which turns away 400 people every weekend. "They can come in as long as they come with gay friends. But what happens is if you get too many straight people in you get a change in atmosphere, the vibe changes."

"It also means you could spend the whole night chatting someone up only to discover at the end of the night that you're not going to get anywhere."

"We get accused of discrimination, but it is positive discrimination, to try to maintain the atmosphere that attracts people in the first place."

John Hamilton, manager of Poptastic, says it is easy to tell who is gay: "By the way they are dressed, by the way they act, their mannerisms and asking them who they kiss and where they go."

Mr O'Dwyer insists that his door policy doesn't mean that only gay "clones" can be

admitted. "Rosie, who does the vetting on the door, is a gay person who spends a lot of time in gay clubs and bars and just gets to know the faces. And there are people we turn away who start to get abusive - shouting 'faggots' and 'queers' - so you know you've made the right decision."

The attraction for straight men and women is that the gay clubs offer a less threatening atmosphere than heterosexual venues. "They know it is a nice, easy-going atmosphere and it's a place where they can just chill out," Gordon Edwards, a doorman at the Paradise Factory told Channel 5. "You don't get the normal, how can you say it, idiot blokes, like you'd normally get in a straight club."

Mr Edwards even believes some straight men come to gay clubs looking for women. "The nicer girls who normally get hassled all night, they come here knowing they're not going to get hassled, so you get a straight lad who uses his head a bit and comes here."

Mr O'Dwyer is also concerned about the kind of straight men he lets in - in case they take offence at being approached by gay men. "If a woman gets her bum touched by a man she's offended. If a straight man has his bum touched by another man it can cause quite a bit of offence."

Mr O'Dwyer blames the success of the annual Manchester gay Mardi Gras, which this year attracted 130,000 people to the gay village, and means there is now a rash of bars opening or planned that will not be strictly gay.

"There are people opening bars here who are almost homophobic, they are just cashing in. Some of the breweries are making an effort to maintain a gay atmosphere, but they're still just interested in money."

"Then there are restaurants like the Mash and Air, which is very nice, but is attracting the yuppie Cheshire set who would never have been seen here before."

What's The Story? Channel 5, Sunday 7pm.

Resort stabbing

A Spanish man was due to be questioned today in connection with the murder of a British holidaymaker who was found stabbed to death on a tourist beach. The body of 50-year-old Peter Simms was found on the beach at Sitges, a popular resort south of Barcelona, on Wednesday.

A local man had been arrested in connection with Mr Simms' murder and was to be interviewed by the examining magistrate investigating the case, said a spokesman at the British consulate in Barcelona. Mr Simms, who worked for

a mobile phone company in Coventry, and was thought to have been single, was due to return home to Northampton tomorrow, after a two-week holiday with a friend. His brother and mother were too upset to speak about his death.

In line with Spanish police practice, the suspect, a 44-year-old local man, was named only by his initials of JOM. A judge is to decide in the next few days whether to release him on bail or keep him in custody. JOM, who was continuing to be questioned by officers, has not admitted murdering Mr Simms.



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Rapture as William passes the Dunrulin test

With this flourish William had at last reached the end of his speech, and of the conference. As Dunrulin erupted into a restrained frenzy of brittle applause, William gave a high whistle, and his faithful Welsh collie, Jenkins, leapt into his arms, licking his face joyfully. It was, William thought, his happiest moment.

Shadow Home Secretary, Sir Brian Mawhinney reflected the mood of many traditionalists when he said the Tories had to accept that the traditional family was changing, through divorce and life-style. "I thought his [Hague's] explanation was exactly right. We have spent so much time defending the concept of Conservative values that impressions were created that we didn't accurately reflect the Conservative Party... we created the impression that if you weren't in a traditional nuclear family, we weren't interested in you. I don't think that was ever true."

**"This garden vacuum
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There are about 40 redundancies and early retirements in the regions, with a further 20 jobs cut in Central Office, including research staff and press officers who were in the front line at the election, and were on duty this week in Blackpool at the party conference.

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997; 277: 1039-1043.

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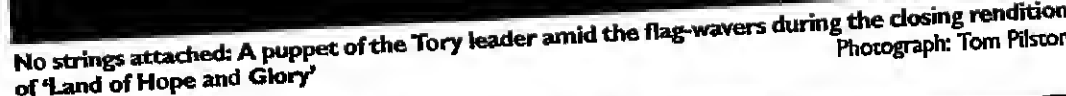
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Hague offers balance of apology and pride

Yet Mr Hague was quick to

John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, commented: "No matter how hard William Hague tries, he cannot disguise two fundamental problems. Their policies were wrong and remain wrong. And their claims of unity are utterly bogus, as the continuing conflict over Europe shows."



"We leave here this week with our hopes restored, our beliefs reaffirmed, our faith renewed. We leave as a party ready to earn once more the trust of the nation we love."

Labour had introduced a cynicism into British politics, he said. The Conservatives must remain the party of principle.



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Papon allowed to be free during trial

Maurice Papon, the Vichy official on trial in Bordeaux for "crimes against humanity", may never serve another day in jail, even if he is convicted. The court decided yesterday that Mr Papon, 87, should be freed during his trial, in deference to his advanced age and medical condition. Under French law, this ruling will also apply if he is convicted and sentenced to prison but lodges an immediate appeal. Such an appeal could last for several years. It took 16 years to bring the present trial to court.

Relatives of some of the 1,558 Jews who were arrested on Papon's orders, and died in Nazi concentration camps,

protested bitterly against the court judgment yesterday. At their lawyers' demand, the trial was suspended until Monday. René Jacob, one of several people who have started civil actions against Papon, said: "The worst of all is that whatever the court finally decides, if Maurice Papon takes the case to appeal, he will probably die peacefully at home ... There is nothing more to be done. I'm going home to send back my military papers. As of tonight, I am no longer Jewish nor French."

During his third night in jail on Thursday, Mr Papon was taken ill with suspected heart trouble. He was moved to a hospital but was well enough to appear

in court yesterday. The presiding judge, to general surprise, announced yesterday afternoon that he had rejected medical advice that Mr Papon should remain in custody, but in hospital, until the trial ended in December. The court decided instead to accept the demands of Mr Papon's lawyers that he be freed unconditionally.

The court said it had taken the decision because there was "no risk of flight", no chance that Papon would pressurise witnesses (most of whom are dead) and because of his great age and medical condition. Papon, who went on after the war to become Paris police chief and French budget minister, is



Maurice Papon: Age and health mean he may never spend another night in jail, even if he is found guilty

suffering from acute angina.

One of Papon's lawyers, Marcel Rouxel, said that, if he had had to sleep in a prison cell, he was "super-sure" he would have died during the trial.

Michel Slitinsky, the son of one of the Jews arrested on Pa-

pon's orders and the man who dug up the evidence incriminating him in 1981, commented: "They say he is a very old man. In the deportation convoys, there were very young children."

— John Lichfield, Paris

Jospin to pay firms that cut working week to 35 hours

The French government plans to subsidise companies which move rapidly to a shorter working week, so long as they create new jobs.

The Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin, made this promise yesterday in an attempt to extricate himself from an earlier promise: that he will impose a 35-hour week within the next five years.

He was speaking at the start of a conference of government, employers and unions on unemployment at the official prime ministerial residence in Paris.

Employers' federations have rejected the Socialists' original campaign promise — a reduction in statutory working hours from 39 hours to 35 without loss of pay — as economically suicidal. Mr Jospin, in government, has come around to their point of view.

But the main union federations went to yesterday's meeting still insisting on the spirit, if not the letter, of Mr Jospin's election pledge. Left-wing elements of his own coalition government are also insisting on a

rapid move to a 35-hour week. The prime minister said yesterday that he would decide how to square this circle after he had heard all sides speak at the conference. He said that he intended to bring forward a framework law which would "launch the movement" towards a shorter working week.

However, he hinted that this would, at least at first, be voluntary. Those companies which took the lead, and created new jobs, would be eligible for "financial aid to diminish labour costs".

The economics of this new idea appeared strange, to say the least. Even left-leaning French economists and commentators have poured cold water on the original suggestion that a shorter working week will create jobs. Now Mr Jospin seemed to be saying that public finances, already under great pressure to meet the guidelines for a single currency, would be used to "buy" reduced working hours.

— John Lichfield

Italy's PM rebuffs coalition plan by communists

Italy's caretaker Prime Minister Romano Prodi reacted coolly to a hardline Communist proposal for a one-year coalition, saying this must be discussed seriously and not through the media. Mr Prodi told journalists that he was not prepared to discuss any proposals still based on the strong stand the hardline Communist Refoundation took against his austerity budget which led to his government's fall.

Serb nationalists win Brcko

Bosnian Serb nationalists won local elections in the fiercely contested town of Brcko, defeating Muslim and Croat parties supported by refugees expelled from the area in wartime. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) mission, which organised municipal elections in Bosnia last month, said three Serb parties won a majority of 30 seats on the 56-member town council. Five parties from the Muslim-Croat federation secured 26 seats on the council.

IMF loans for Croatia

The International Monetary Fund released almost \$80m in loans for Croatia. The United States, the IMF's largest shareholder, had led complaints that the former Yugoslav republic was not meeting the terms of the 1995 Dayton peace accord which ended the Bosnia war. The deadlock was broken this week when Zagreb handed over 10 suspects to the war crimes tribunal in The Hague.

American runs for Lithuania

A court cleared the way for a Lithuanian-American to run for president of the Baltic country, finding that he had met the residency requirement. Valdas Adamkus, 70, who recently retired as regional manager for the US Environmental Protection Agency in Chicago, has been considered a front-runner for the 21 December elections. But the electoral commission had refused earlier this month to issue Adamkus the necessary voter petitions on the grounds that he had not lived in Lithuania for three years.

Ecstasy racket broken

Military police in the Netherlands have busted a large-scale drug ring that made millions of ecstasy pills and sold 5,000 to 10,000 per week to two officers, one based in Utrecht, and the other in Munster, north-west Germany. It said the pair were arrested with four other people who ran an operation capable of manufacturing up to 50,000 ecstasy pills per hour. Authorities in Gouda said the officer in Germany had operated on his own, and that German officials did not plan to investigate further.

Britain snubbed in Euro-summit

Russia, Germany and France will hold annual summits to co-ordinate policies on common problems challenging them, Russian President Boris Yeltsin announced yesterday.

The decision is a huge snub to Britain, which is not apparently considered to be in the front rank of European powers.

With French President Jacques Chirac at his side during a break in a Council of Europe summit, Mr Yeltsin said that the three countries faced similar problems and should work together to solve them.

France and Germany already hold summits every six months to co-ordinate European policy, and the trilateral summit — the first joining countries from across the former Cold War divide — marked a further step in Russia's reintegration into Europe.

"All three have common problems," said Mr Yeltsin, who, in recent weeks, has been urging Europeans to unite more against outside interference, a veiled criticism of the United States and the plan to expand the Nato alliance eastwards.

"We have agreed to meet together every year," he said. "We have agreed this was indispensable for the creation of a Grand Europe which includes Russia," Mr Chirac said he

was very pleased with the decision and added: "I think this represents an important European force and a necessary element to further assure peace."

Mr Yeltsin, looking fit after his heart surgery last year, said that the time and place of the first trilateral summit had not yet been decided.

"I'll go where Jacques tells me to go and if Helmut invites us, I'll accept his invitation," he said. "I'd like to invite them too." Chirac promptly suggested the first meeting could be in Sverdlovsk, Mr Yeltsin's political power base in Siberia.

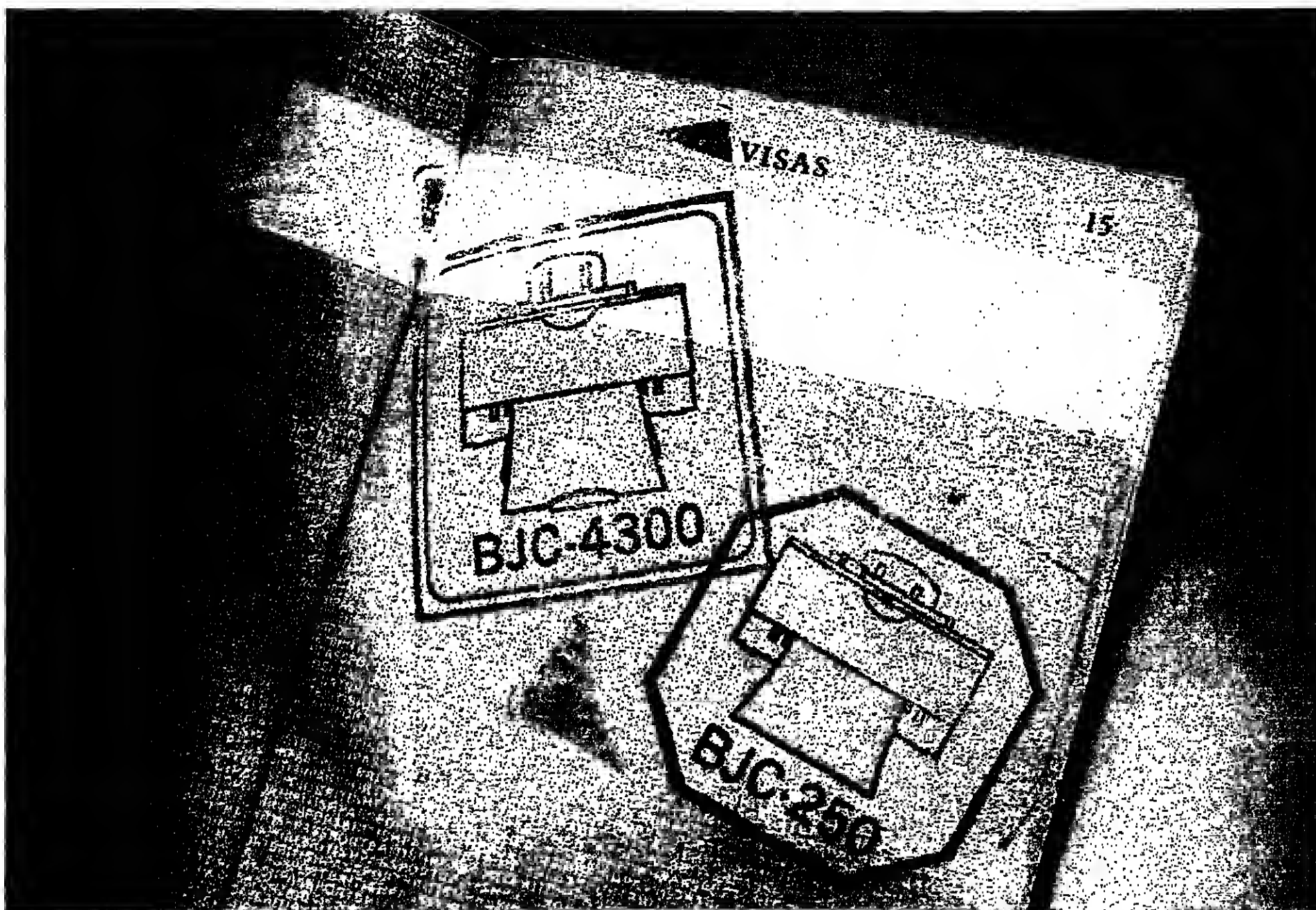
While most summit participants have limited themselves to urging the Council to do more to protect human rights, Mr Yeltsin has come to the summit to claim a central role for Russia in a new united Europe.

Left out of the European Union and Nato, he would like to see the Council play a larger role in European affairs alongside the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). "A Europe without Russia is no Europe," he said last week.

Recognised as a key figure in ending the Cold War, the Kremlin chief has a warm reception from summit host Mr Chirac.

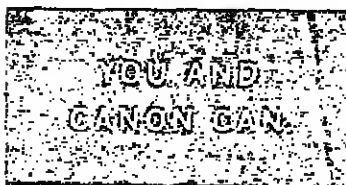
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13/SOUTH AFRICA

Bitter Afrikaners go north to set up white-only territory

A 'Boer Republic' is being established this weekend just 50 miles east of Pretoria. Its founders - 200 Afrikaner families - say it is their right to go it alone. The blacks they evicted disagree. Now, the beleaguered whites once again circle the wagon trains.

Wind and heavy drizzle batter the headstone in the middle of the cemetery. In Afrikaans, T and B Steyn have inscribed "Here lies our dear Ella, born 12 January 1898, died 18 December 1901 in the concentration camp at Balmoral."

Around Ella's tiny grave are hundreds of others - mostly without stones - for the women and children who perished in the camp set up by the British during the Boer war just beyond the dirt road. More than 26,000 Afrikaners, mainly women and children, perished in such camps.

Apart from Ella, the bodies and names are largely unmatched and victims share the memorial engraved with their names at the entrance gate. The least fortunate are piled in mass graves at the far corner of the cemetery; history will never remember their names.

The concentration camps are etched on the consciousness of every Afrikaner, marking an episode of appalling victimisation of a people who would later become racial oppressors.

This weekend the graveyard finds itself at the heart of a new 'Boer Republic' on land jointly purchased by 200 Afrikaner families from which black people will be banned. It will be governed by the old, austere, Calvinist principles which in the 19th century sent the fiercely independent Afrikaners trekking in wagon trains from the Cape into the wild interior to escape British rule.

Since the coming of black majority rule in 1994, deposed Afrikaners have begun to trek again, heading north into Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique, setting up farms and Boer-only communities. At home, 600 have trekked into the northern Karoo to found Orania, whose patron saint is Hendrik Verwoerd, the reviled architect of apartheid, and where blacks are so unwel-

come that whites prefer to clean their own streets.

Balmoral is the most bizarre exercise in Afrikaner exclusivity so far. For these trekkers - shareholders in the new Boere Republiek Kooperatief Bepok (Boer Republic Co-operative Ltd) - have barely left the mainstream to circle the wagons. The republic - 470 acres of farmland - lies just off a main motorway, 50 miles east of Pretoria.

It is apt that the graveyard should lie at its centre, for once again Afrikaners feel victimised and under attack. "The intention of this regime is to destroy us," said Andries Campher, 53, a towering farmer with rough, shovel-sized hands, and one of the founders. "We just want to survive financially as a group, with our own identity still

intends to buy more land later.

And land is the thorny issue. For the new republic has already evicted local black people. According to Mr Campher, farm workers employed by the previous owner were told that their labour was no longer needed. He claims they hung around for a while but eventually disappeared.

Blacks have told another story. One weeping woman says that the Boers conducted a campaign of terror and intimidation, forcing her off the land she was born on.

"That's rubbish," said Mr Campher. "They just moved on. I over spoke to them personally. They were nothing to me then and they are nothing to me now." New legislation which would have strengthened black workers' rights to tenure does not come into effect for another few months. In recent months farmers all over South Africa have been evicting blacks before the new laws are introduced. Mr Campher says he was well aware that the legislation was coming.

The African National Congress says that the Boer Republic Co-operative has operated lawfully. But the Pan Africanist Congress says the ANC is failing to grasp the land issue and is allowing Afrikaners to grab land as if it was still the 19th century.

Fritz Meyer, another "republic" founder, insists that the Afrikaner families are simply setting up a business and that racism plays no part. But the founders clearly feel they are the true defenders of the land. Yesterday, they petitioned the British High Commission in Pretoria for a mission in Pretoria for the "autonomy" for the concentration camp deaths. The vast majority of Afrikaners who are trying to find their place inside, not outside, the new South Africa are seen by some as traitors.

As Mr Campher conducted a tour of the cemetery, two middle-aged Afrikaners from nearby Witbank looked on. One rolled his eyes in disbelief. "This republic is just not viable," he said. His friend says the new South Africa is certainly tougher. Before the political changes he was never out of work. He has just spent six months unemployed. But he has an interesting take on the old wagon metaphor. "It will do no good if the oxen pulling the wagon go in opposite directions," he said. "All South Africans must pull together now." He shrugged, without a hint of bitterness.

BY MARY BRAID

intact." The alternative, he insists, is annihilation.

Mr Campher complains about affirmative action for blacks and rising white unemployment. Christian values, he says, are being eroded to schools where educational standards are plummeting and Afrikaans is no longer spoken. To stop the rot Boers must build their own communities, businesses, homes and schools, and govern once again, albeit in a miniature kingdom.

Hopes have evaporated that the South African government

ERROR IN POPULATION

Three months ago South Africa was shocked to discover its population was only 38 million, four million less than previously thought. Calculations were apparently confused by the previous regime's over-estimate of black fertility rates.

Of the 38 million, 77 per cent are classified black, 12 per cent white, 9 per cent coloured (mixed race) and 2 per cent Asian. Roughly 60 per cent - 2.6 million - of white South Africans are Afrikaners, though their language, Afrikaans, is the third most spoken in the country after Zulu (22 per cent) and Xhosa (18 per cent).

Afrikaans is also far more common than English as a second language yet English, must to the ire of Afrikaners, is increasingly being adopted as the official "neutral" language of new South Africa.

will hand over land for a Volkstaat. And provided you are white and Afrikaner the Balmoral "republic" offers democracy. Every investor owns the same share and has an equal say in government. Although not all of the 200 investors will live on the land, some will begin laying the foundations for new homes this weekend. The group

the political changes he was never out of work. He has just spent six months unemployed.

But he has an interesting take on the old wagon metaphor. "It will do no good if the oxen pulling the wagon go in opposite directions," he said. "All South Africans must pull together now." He shrugged, without a hint of bitterness.



Bitter memory: A French magazine illustration of British forces rounding up Boers for concentration camps in 1901

Mary Evans Picture Library



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Short leaps to defence of Rwanda

Clare Short has backed the Rwandan government, which has been criticised for human rights abuses. The British Cabinet minister said the country was the victim of genocide. *Amelia French reports from Kigali.*

Ms Short dismissed accusations that prisoners in Rwanda are held in appallingly overcrowded conditions, and claims of human rights abuses.

"You can't just denounce the fact that there's lots of people in prison. They're charged with genocide," Ms Short said. She was speaking during a visit yesterday to Gikondo prison, just outside the Rwandan capital, Kigali.

More than 120,000 people are believed to be held in prisons and makeshift jails

awaiting trial for the 1994 genocide in which members of the country's Hutu majority killed 800,000 Tutsis and Hutu opponents to the former regime. In some jails, prisoners barely have room to move.

"We have to give support that will help them to get people to trial, and other ways of helping to rebuild the country, but pretending that genocide didn't happen and certainly turning on the government of Rwanda because there are too many people in prison is the international community once again not accepting its responsibilities. Denouncing Rwanda is a disgrace," she said. She said the whole international community was guilty of what happened in Rwanda.

During her tour, Ms Short spoke briefly to prisoners. Perched on raised shelves to create more space, inmates looked at the visitors with weary curiosity.

Ms Short questioned a gynaecologist in charge of Aids patients. Dr Cyridion Ukuliyimfura was wearing the regulation pink prison uniform. "So you're ac-

cused of being involved in the genocide? A doctor?" she said. He nodded.

"So let me ask you - you're an educated man - why did the genocide happen in Rwanda?" she asked.

"It was bad education for the population since the Sixties. There were deep divisions within the society," Dr Ukuliyimfura said. "It's not your size or the shape of your nose or whatever that allows to divide ourselves. We have the same language and the same culture."

Ms Short dismissed recent reports criticising the Rwandan army for killing unarmed civilians during operations against Hutu rebels in north-west Rwanda.

A recent report by Amnesty International alleged that 6,000 people, most of them unarmed civilians, were killed in Rwanda between January and August this year, mainly by the Rwandan army.

Ms Short was on the second of a two-day visit to Rwanda. The money pledged to Rwanda is to be spent on education, justice and revenue collection.



Short: the whole international community is guilty over Rwanda

Truce heralds peace in Papua New Guinea

Warring factions on the Papua New Guinea island of Bougainville signed a truce yesterday but said a lasting agreement lay in the hands of political leaders.

"A momentum for peace is already under way," said the Prime Minister, Bill Skate, in a statement released in Port Moresby welcoming the signing of the peace accord.

The so-called Burnham Truce was reached after 10 days of talks at the Burnham army camp, near New Zealand's South Island city of Christchurch.

The conflict, which has claimed thousands of lives and displaced many into care centres, began when landowners revolted in 1988 over damage caused by the huge Panguna copper mine and the royalties they received from it.

Bougainville has been a huge political headache for Papua New Guinea, and the former prime minister Sir Julius Chan this year provoked the country's biggest crisis since independence in 1975 by trying to bring in Anglo-South African mercenaries

to put down the rebellion around the mine. The mine now closed, is owned by an arm of the Anglo-Australian giant Rio Tinto Ltd.

The interim truce agreement outlined immediate measures to stop fighting pending a formal meeting of leaders, hopefully by the end of January.

Signatories were representatives of the Papua New Guinea government, the Bougainville Transitional Government which it backs, the rebel Bougainville Interim Government and its associate the Bougainville Revolutionary Army, as well as Papua New Guinea security forces and resistance commanders.

The truce said its signatories agreed to what it called "immediate interim measures" including refraining from acts of armed confrontation.

The various factions also pledged to respect human rights, promote peace and reconciliation in the community and lift all restrictions to restore freedom of movement to islanders, subject to "appropriate clearances".

Japan's youth told to shape up and get fit

Japan's Education Ministry had a message for the country's youth on the national sports day holiday - "Shape up and get fit, you're falling behind".

According to a ministry survey, today's teenagers are less fit and athletic than their predecessors of a decade ago. The ministry said today's teens scored lower in physical fitness and athletic ability than those who took the test in 1986. The biggest decline was among 18-year-old boys and girls.

Los Angeles editor resigns

Shelby Coffey III resigned after nine years as editor of the *Los Angeles Times* and was replaced by managing editor Michael Parks in a makeover that included a major reorganisation of news and business operations. The changes were announced by the newspaper as part of a campaign by publisher Mark H. Wills to boost circulation by 50 per cent to 1.5 million.

Surprise leader for Kazakhstan

Oil-rich Kazakhstan's market reforms were thrown into doubt yesterday by the surprise appointment of the state oil boss as prime minister. Diplomats and investors in Kazakhstan had already factored in the departure of its embattled reformist prime minister, Akezhan Kazhegeldin. But his replacement, Nurlan Balgimbayev, the head of state oil company KazakhOil, took them by surprise.

Church watches over Africa

African church leaders ended a six-day assembly in the Ethiopian capital, pledging to speak out against human rights abuses on the world's poorest continent. The clerics, meeting under the auspices of the All-Africa Council of Churches (AACC), and presided over by Nobel peace laureate, Desmond Tutu, of South Africa, gave notice to African leaders that their administrations would come under close scrutiny.

US has field day with corn crop

As the harvest gets into full swing, estimates for this year's United States corn crop rose slightly to 9.31 billion bushels - the third-largest crop in history, the Agriculture Department reported. The October corn projection is 44 million bushels higher than last month's forecast and 18 million bushels more than the 1996 crop. This year's crop, if realised, will trail only the 1992 and 1994 corn harvests in size.

Clinton curbs tax agency power

President Bill Clinton yesterday announced plans to 'reinvent' the tax agency and rein in overzealous revenue collectors. As Mary Dejevsky reports, he was trying to quell a growing public outcry against the most feared and detested institution in the United States.

This was one of the very few occasions in Bill Clinton's presidency when he was late - and he knew it. Normally a consummate judge of the popular mood, he had spent the past two weeks seeming to protect the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) from charges that it was callous, malicious and out of control. Yesterday, he said he was introducing a package of 200 measures to make the IRS more accountable and responsive to taxpayers' complaints. The measures include the abolition of targets for the amount of tax to be collected by individual IRS offices, an extension of payment deadlines for people with health problems, the formation of local appeals boards, and a new board of trustees with a private sector majority to "ensure service

every bit as good as in the private sector".

Mr Clinton said, somewhat defensively, that he believed this was "the right way" to reform the agency, his only allusion to calls for the abolition of the IRS following revelations of abuses at recent congressional hearings. The three-day hearings had produced a torrent of bitter complaints from small businesses and families about what they saw as vindictive and even unlawful treatment by the IRS.

The IRS is one of the few institutions in the United States which can cow the most rights-conscious Americans. Those testifying at the hearings spoke of an agency with "unbridled power" that behaved as "judge, jury and executioner". Some broke down as they told of families ruined by "the one court in the land where you are guilty until proven innocent".

While acknowledging the justice of many complaints, Mr Clinton had initially defended the overall integrity of the service - a move that allowed exultant Republicans to call for the wholesale overhaul, if not abolition, of the IRS and the present tax code.

The changes announced by Mr Clinton yesterday - for a modest reform of the status quo coupled with enhanced taxpayers' rights - were dismissed by Republicans as inadequate.

NATIVE TO THE NORTH AMERICAN PACIFIC COAST, *Oncorhynchus Mykiss*, the Steelhead Trout, migrates upstream from the sea to spawn. Sometimes reaching nearly 8,000ft above sea level. The sort of altitude where you'll also come across something else in its natural habitat: the Jeep Grand Cherokee. A Grand Cherokee will take you into the wildest terrain, whilst its anti lock discs are there to stop you (literally) bumping into any grizzlies. Along with a muscular 2.5 litre turbo diesel or 4.0 litre petrol engine, the Grand Cherokee Laredo's extensive



MR. MRS/MISS/MS INITIALS SURNAME ADDRESS POSTCODE PHONE HOME PHONE BUSINESS

15/ENVIRONMENT



Telephone company vehicles trapped in a river of mud at Acapulco after the onslaught of Hurricane Pauline

Photograph: Andrew Winning/Reuters

Killer floods cause havoc in Acapulco

El Nino, the climatic phenomenon that distorts weather the world over, is reaping a bitter harvest in Mexico. Floods in Acapulco have killed over a hundred.

She disappeared as quickly as she had come but left Mexicans and foreign tourists in a state of shock. No one will forget the day Pauline came to Acapulco.

As the hurricane winds died to an eerie whisper yesterday, residents of the popular Pacific resort faced the gruesome task of trying to find the bodies of missing relatives among the hundreds of corpses recovered

after Thursday's disaster. Holding hands over their noses, they walked between rows of deformed, flood-bloated bodies, including several children in pyjamas or nightdresses, laid out on the concrete floor of the Acapulco municipal morgue.

Mexican officials confirmed at least 122 dead, mostly in Acapulco. Also badly hit were the rest of the state of Guerrero and the neighbouring state of Oaxaca. More than 250 were injured and dozens were still missing. One report spoke of three German tourists missing from a nudist beach resort at Zipolite.

Meteorologists warned that although Pauline had faded from a Category 3 hurricane to a mere tropical depression yesterday over southern Mexico, she could stage a revival farther north, closer to the US border, over the weekend.

Experts at the National Hurricane Centre in Miami said the suddenness and unexpected fury of Pauline, as well as the speed with which the hurricane dissipated, appeared to be the result of the so-called "El Niño" (The Christ Child) weather phenomenon. Under the phenomenon, warm Pacific currents off the west coast of South America are pushing farther north than usual, changing weather patterns along the coast.

"It's a normal hurricane season in the eastern Pacific. We've had 16 named storms, eight of which developed into hurricanes," said Frank Lepore, a National Hurricane Centre spokesman. "But typically, if they start off Mexico, they head west-north-west out into the open ocean. With the warmer waters, they are now tending to go north and north-east on to land, including the south-western United States."

That is what happened last month when Hurricane Linda - the most intense hurricane ever recorded, while it was over the eastern Pacific - caused widespread flooding in south-west Arizona. Hurricane Nora also dumped unprecedented rainfalls on Arizona.

El Niño has also been blamed for recent floods in Peru, off whose coast the phenomenon originates, and Chile, where tens of thousands of people have lost their homes and floodwaters have brought a worrying upsurge in the virus-spreading rat population.

The Hurricane Centre in Miami expressed surprise that El Niño, which had not been expected to reveal major effects until around Christmas, had shown itself so early. They said the phenomenon could be followed by the reverse effect - dubbed La Niña (The Little

Girl) - as the warm currents that had moved north shift back southwards. That could bring serious drought to Mexico and the southern US, they said.

In Acapulco, a partying and gambling mecca for the Hollywood stars of the Forties and Fifties, and more recently a haven for Mexican politicians and millionaires, the effects of Hurricane Pauline served as a reminder of Mexico's wealth gap. The American-style high-rise chain hotels along the beach emerged unscathed but for eroded beaches and flooded cellars, while the shanty towns above, on the 3,000-ft ridge behind the city, were devastated by landslides.

Mexican peasants from inland Guerrero or other states flock to Acapulco and build simple homes while looking for work as waiters or maids, or other jobs serving those who sip piña colodas in the hotels or night-clubs below.

Most of the dead were swept away, many while still in their wooden homes, as driving

BY
PHIL
DAVISON

rains turned normally dry river beds into raging torrents and mudslides. Boulders the size of cars were swept downhill, crushing homes. Horrified neighbours watched as one stone house plunged downhill as though it were a raft negotiating rapids. Bodies could be seen protruding from mud, arms outstretched as though they had been desperately trying to grab something solid.

"We were asleep when the water came smashing through our living-room. We all got out alive except for my sister," Rafael Diaz Servin, a 35-year-old waiter, told a Reuters reporter as he stood over his sister Laura, covered by a sheet of blue plastic, in the morgue.

Cars and bodies littered Acapulco Bay, ever known as the world's cleanest zone. The city had been trying to clean up the bay, traditionally polluted by direct sewage from the city, but most tourists preferred to stick to their seafloor hotel swimming pools. In the newer tourist resort of Huatulco, the Sheraton hotel appeared to have lost its entire beach yesterday. And in Puerto Escondido, where surfers from around the world flock to ride a breaker known as "The Tube," beachfront restaurants and bars were swept away.

Danger beetle sneaks in

A highly destructive pest of commercial timber woodlands has been imported into Britain using deception. Oliver Tickell reports on a beetle's threat to our forestry plantations.

A chance inspection at Dover docks has led to the discovery of Britain's worst ever infestation of spruce bark beetles.

"This is more than enough to start an outbreak in our woodlands," said Roddy Burgess, head of the Forestry Commission's plant health division.

The commission got on the beetle trail when inspecting a 20-tonne shipment of wood from the Czech Republic. The wood concealed within the packs still had its bark on and was riddled with spruce bark beetles. The inspector noticed the rough-sawn wood had been misdeclared to customs as "planed timber", thus escaping the usual plant health inspection, as spruce

bark beetles live only under the bark, not in the wood.

The commission then traced five similar shipments to the West London Timber Company's yard in Woking, Surrey. On removing a piece of bark at random, it found 19 spruce bark beetles.

Mr Burgess said: "This is a straight case of deception. The timber was deliberately assembled so as to conceal the borers inside. It was only through sheer luck that this came to light."

The beetle is a major cause of tree death in Continental Europe, though British forests have so far escaped its ravages. But in August the Forestry Commission found beetles near British-grown logs at a paper mill in north Wales, suggesting that they might have established a British colony. Mr Burgess says it is unlikely that the north Wales and Woking incidents are connected.

The commission is now inspecting all timber imports from the Czech Republic and is installing beetle traps, using a powerful sex hormone attractant, in the Woking area to see whether any beetles have escaped.

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—Kim Sengupta

During her visit, the Queen has watched Pakistan play South Africa at cricket – the




The Queen used the occasion of her speech before both houses of the National Assembly in Islamabad on Wednesday to scold Pakistan and India for their failure to get along. "We all know ... that animosity retards development, that development requires trust, that lack of trust closes off opportunities," she said. "Unfortunately,

However, the British government's offer to use its "good offices" to resolve the dispute, made by Derek Fatchett, minister in the Foreign Office, during a visit to the region in the spring, was turned down very flat by India. It is doubtful the Government will risk the good vibrations of a state visit to push the idea any harder.

Royal progress: The Queen meeting war hero Ali Haider Banghash, 80, in Islamabad this week. Top left, crowds during the glittering 1961 tour. Photographs: Ian Jones/Hulton Getty

FAMINE IN NORTH KOREA URGENT APPEAL FOR AID



For the third consecutive year the harvest in North Korea has been ruined by devastating floods. Many homes have been destroyed and millions of people face starvation. Already huge numbers of children are barely surviving on a diet of tree bark, grass and roots. The floods have also severely damaged the nation's health system leaving it ill-equipped to deal with malnourished and suffering children. The people of North Korea are in desperate need. The Red Cross is organising emergency supplies of food to vulnerable groups and medical equipment to the failing health sector.

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At the court of the once and future king

Snoo Wilson's 'HRH' catches up with Edward and Mrs Simpson in the Bahamas in the 1940s. A two-hander for Corin Redgrave and Amanda Donohoe, it takes up the tale where 'Always', the musical, all too suddenly left off.

The ex-king is dead, long live the ex-king! We've hardly drawn breath since conducting the funeral rites over *Always* and now here are the Duke of Windsor and Mrs Simpson experiencing a speedy theatrical resurrection in Snoo Wilson's *HRH*. This two-hander is an altogether more astringent and blackly stylish piece of work than that grovelling musical which, conveniently amnesiac about the Duke's Führer-fancying and hopes of making a crowned comeback in a Nazi Britain, despatched the lovebirds to a

BY PAUL
TAYLOR

married future of unclouded happiness.

HRH puts the record straight on that little fantasy. We meet up with the Windsors in 1943, when the Duke was Governor-General of the Bahamas. In the diplomatic pecking order, this is Siberia with add-on humidity. How it ripples with them, though precisely what higher posting a wartime government could have given an ex-king with pro-Hider sympathies is hard to say. The Bahamas gig affords them lots of leisure, though, to pick at the scab of a seven-year marriage for which he had sacrificed a throne and she had, to all intents and purposes, sacrificed the right ever to divorce again.

The play is alive in the grotesque comedy of the situation (the little pornography games the fretful, slighted couple play, like squirreling Queen Mary's jewels in a place that would faze the most hardened Customs official). But it also shows that the undivine duo are in what might be called a tragic Windsor-knot.

Distracting himself from the depths he's too frightened to face by playing George Formby tunes on his banjo, Corin Redgrave's damaged silly-ass Duke is like the little boy the couple never had.

Amanda Donohoe's Duchess – pulling her features into various DIY facelift poses and employing diphthongs that make Lloyd Grossman sound like Dolly Parton – doesn't look too sad at having only one baby around the house. Earlier this season, there was a show called *Women on the Verge of HRT*; the Duchess thought she was a woman on the verge of HRH. But, as more recent history demonstrates, the Palace likes to be spared where those three letters are concerned. The petty snobbery of the Duchess is not overlooked here, but the play also brings home how her position as King-maker exposed her to being humiliated by jobs. You have only to recall the mob ugliness that erupted at the mere mention of Camilla Parker Bowles during that TV debate on the future of the monarchy to appreciate the dangers she must have faced.

The Duke's dim-wit dealings with shady businessmen in the Bahamas made those dangers worse. The play suggests that he colluded in a murder cover-up, causing an innocent man to be prosecuted so as to protect the real culprit, a property dealer who had helped him transfer huge amounts of currency to a Nazi-owned bank in Mexico. Quids in, then (or rather dollars), in the event of a German victory.

Given that the piece is a two-hander, this quite complicated story has to be relayed through references to a lot of off-stage characters, which is a drawback. In Simon Cullow's enjoyable production, the psychological advances of the narrow and intense focus on the couple aren't exploited as well as they were when an earlier version of *HRH* was mounted at Theatre Clwyd, Mold, three years ago. There, with the pair marooned on a mirrored disk in the middle of the audience, you got a whiff of a claustrophobic Sartrean hell. Here, the set is standard-issue colonial, suitable for Maugham or Coward. This funny, elegantly baleful play needs something more abstract.

Playhouse Theatre, London WC2 (0171-839 4401). Booking to 22 Nov



Amanda Donohoe as Mrs Simpson, the not-so-gay divorcee

Photo: Nigel Norrington

THE WEEK ON RADIO ROBERT HANKS

Divided by a common understanding

A shocking statistic: over 1,200 Irish pubs have opened across Europe in the last four years, from Barcelona to Berlin. The reason it's shocking is that, as Gerry Anderson pointed out last week in *Gerry's Bar* (R4, Fri), "the Irish pub", with its sawdust on the floor and strong men boiling over with animal spirits, is a fantasy.

Irishness itself is problematic – national identity is rarely simple, but Ireland's is more hedged about with traps and qualifications than most. *Gerry's Bar* is one of two series concerned with those difficulties. The other is *North and South* (R4, Wed), in which the novelist Colum Tobin is trekking along and around the Irish border. The four programmes were recorded in the winter of 1995/6, shortly before the Canary Wharf bomb ended the peace process, and Tobin was largely concerned with tracing the effects of peace, and the after-effects of conflict. So the programmes are full of hopeful images of the detritus of war: border posts torn down, barracks left empty, roads reopened, communities meeting one another after 20 years' separation. The optimism sometimes makes you wince (if not as often as the corny Irish folk soundtrack does), and it would be nice to have some footnotes on what's going on now, in the second, less cheerful ceasefire; have the troops returned? Are the communities estranged again?

Borders are always a temptation to writers, zones full of resonance and metaphorical possibility, and Tobin is no ascetic. But beneath the poetic manner, the series has a hard core of fact – everything is observed, little is asserted – and a tough-minded refusal to let anyone claim the moral high ground. True, there is a constant sense of the irrationality of the ragged line between North and South, which you could take to be evidence of Republican sympathies. But in this week's second programme, he consciously disdained any glamorising of the Republican tradition, quoting from Yeats: "We have fed our hearts on fantasy, and our hearts grown brutal on the fare." (That could also be the motto for *The Playboy of the Western World*, this week's Monday Play on Radio 4, the tale of a self-proclaimed murderer all but worshipped for his crime: Peter Kavanagh's production rightly emphasised the darkness of the underlying emotion over the comical absurdity of the situation.)

The outward bluntness of Gerry Anderson's delivery can outlast an underlying hazy idealism. I'm one of Anderson's admirers, but still agnostic about his scripted talks – his natural twinkle sounds too studied. His habitual "We're all mad here" view of Ireland seems clumsy beside Tobin's grimmer appreciation of insanity, too; it doesn't leave much room for nuance. Yesterday's talk ended with him driving from the rustic paradise of Donegal back to Derry; the first thing he saw on arriving home was a news item about a young man hurt in a car crash, and stripped of wallet, watch and shoes by a mob. "Home, sweet home," Anderson concluded.

It seemed an unimaginative contrast. Yet the first headline on the next news bulletin was about an Ulsterman who slit a boy's throat for wearing Celtic colours. Sometimes nuance is a luxury we can do without.

Dark, brutal passion – and not a poker in sight

DANCE

Edward II
Birmingham Hippodrome

Ballet doesn't have to carry a "U" certificate – as Kenneth MacMillan was ever at pains to demonstrate – and in making a ballet of the torrid life and sticky end of Edward II, David Bintley set out to create a dark, flavoursome, sugar-free entertainment. It was made in 1995 for Stuttgart Ballet, and with the help of two principals from that production (Sabrina Lenzi and the excellent Wolfgang Skellwitz), Bintley has now revived it for Birmingham Royal Ballet, who gave its British premiere on Thursday.

Bintley's gift for storytelling is not infallible (remember *Cygnets*?) but in *Edward II* the narrative pace and John McCabe's rearing strings and angry drums zip along so that we can cut right to the chase, with none of the expository *longueurs* that so silt the MacMillan's *Macbeth*. Within 10 minutes we know who's



Oliver Hindle as the Grim Reaper in a stylish 'Edward II'

Photograph: Laurie Lewis

who and what they are up to.

The curtain rises on a magnificent funeral cortege, looming pillars, cowed figures and dense fog eerily lit by Peter Mumford's expressive lighting. The monks file off, Edward is crowned and immediately resumes his exhilarating *trous en l'air* with the mercurial Piers Gaveston (Andrew Murphy).

His wife is less than thrilled and soon embarks on some steamy pair work of her own with Joseph Cipolla's king-making Mortimer, who is quite clearly A Bad Thing. He and his Barons initiate a civil war in their quest for more power and dominate the stage in testosterone-rich ensembles worthy of the Bolshoi.

The historical narrative is intercut with the 14th-century morality tale *Roman de Renart*, in which a donkey is made king. This is told by a motley crew, including a Fool who sports a large foam-rubber erection that will be familiar to anyone who has ever tried to construct a giraffe with pink modelling balloons.

These costumes are designed by Jasper Conran. Sabrina Lenzi gets to model a succession of ravishing bias-cut *devore* velvet creations that had me dribbling into my programme. Never mind T-shirts: this ballet could take merchandising into an entirely different league. The ladies of the court wear plain black gowns crowned by a fantastical array of medieval funeral millinery ranging from wimples to distended mortarboards.

Not all of Conran's costumes are this successful. The Barons have more studded leather coppieces than you can shake a stick at – if that's your idea of a good time. This heavy emphasis on leathers is reminiscent of the RSC in its late-Seventies hiker period.

Much of the ballet's visual impact is thanks to Peter J. Davison's mechanistically medieval sets. A high, wide window at the back slides open like a hangar door – a clever design that enlarges still further the Hippodrome's handsome stage. The

opening reveals coronations, sunny blue skies and advancing battalions of blood-thirsty Barons. It's a brutal ballet: Isabella slaps her nurse (the excellent Marion Tait), the nurse spits in Gaveston's face, Gaveston is anally raped by the Barons and the King is peed on by his guards before he endures the final, fatal humiliation. His assassin, Lightborne (Tony Norman Wright), is a skinhead who dances a strangely gentle *pas de deux* with his victim before a purcellus suddenly falls and a glowing brazier is wheeled on. Lightborne tenderly places a black bag over the King's head before taking careful, and terrible, aim.

Family entertainment it ain't. But it's a strong tale, told with conviction, danced with passion and staged with the greatest possible style. Definitely worth shelling out for a babysitter.

Tu Tics (booking: 0121-622 7488); then on tour

Louise Levene

A WEEK IN THE ARTS DAVID LISTER

Something's rotten in the state of theatre, at least according to *The Stage*, which this week predicts a spate of financial crises: a possible merger in Liverpool, possible closures elsewhere. Duncan Weldon, director of Chichester Festival Theatre, wants to shut up shop for half the year, with dark hints of closing altogether if more cash can't be found.

Talking to Weldon, I found him extremely downbeat, not just about Chichester but about the future of theatre in general. Young people, he says, are simply not going to the theatre. "I don't think it's that they can't afford it; they can afford to buy CDs. They just have other interests. We've got a serious illness in the theatre, and I don't know how you solve it." Apocalyptic words. But Weldon is not alone in prophesying the worst. Jude Kelly, director of West Yorkshire Playhouse, agrees that, for many in their late teens and early twenties, theatre simply isn't on the agenda: "It isn't rock 'n' roll."

But why? No real analysis has been done. How does one reconcile Weldon's diagnosis of an "illness in the theatre" with the huge numbers of youngsters going to *Shopping and Fucking* and *Pycnon* in the West End, or the 88 per cent attendance, in all weathers, at Shakespeare's Globe. True, Mark Ravenhill's and Ben Elton's plays were soon seen as trendy, while the Globe remains a fascinating novelty. But there is another factor. Weldon is wrong, I believe, in excluding price from his analysis. I believe it weighs heavily with young people contemplating a night out. The Globe had standing and sitting at £5. And when the BAC in south London introduced "pay what you can" nights, they too rapidly sold out. If West End producers really are serious about bringing in a new, younger audience, why don't they experiment by offering a good range of tickets at the same price as cinema seats, and maybe even free admission on Mondays, when theatres can be all too dismally empty?

What a pity the ruling council of the Royal Academy had to signal the demise of its mercurial exhibitions secretary, Norman Rosenthal. Censuring him for recent remarks they found "unacceptable" isn't too worrying. But what about that vote of confidence? As football managers down the ages, Michael Foot and various other victims of a vote of confidence by their employers or colleagues could tell him, Norman's fate is now well and truly sealed.



Culture secretary Chris Smith tells *Music Week* magazine what a fan he is of the popular beat combos: "I enjoy listening to a Pulp tape almost as much as I enjoy listening to a Mahler symphony." But asked if he has been to any gigs lately, he replies: "Not since I took over responsibility for the music industry, but that's partly because I haven't had any invitations. If anyone wants to invite me to things, I would be keen to go." There is another alternative, Chris, ground-breakingly radical as it must appear to anyone in the House of Commons. But one can always indulge one's passions by buying a ticket.

In the Eye on Monday: Dominic Dromgool pays tribute to Roy MacGregor, author of 'Snake in the Grass' and a playwright who sadly found his voice all too late. Plus Robert Hanks on Evans v Greening & Ball, or the breakfast-time battle for listeners between Virgin and Radio 1



THE WEEK IN REVIEW DAVID BENEDICT

THE BALLET	THE TV SERIES	THE FILM
Cinderella	A Dance to the Music of Time	Nil by Mouth
Adventures in Motion Pictures present Prokofiev's ballet with Sarah Wildor and ex-Royal Ballet star Adam Cropper, directed and choreographed by Matthew Bourne. Lez Brotherston designs. Piccadilly Theatre, London W1 (0171-369 1734) to Jan 10.	Anthony Powell's 12-volume novel adapted by Hugh White more into four two hour TV films (at a cost of £10m) with a Rolls-Royce cast led by Simon Russell Beale with Sir John Gielgud, Miranda Richardson and Alan Bennett plus all the usual suspects. Thursdays, 9pm, Channel 4.	Actor Gary Oldman's makes his debut as writer and director with a fierce and fatalistic family drama set on a run-down south London housing estate, starring Ray Winstone as a violent minor villain married to Kathy Burke. Cert 18, 120 mins, on general release
Long-time Bourne fan Louise Levene was disappointed. "Neither as dramatic nor as funny as most of his earlier work..." "[Bourne] has one of the most dazzling theatrical imaginations in the business... the one thing that's frustratingly lacking in the production is dance," agreed <i>The Guardian</i> . "As good as the notorious <i>Siren Lake</i> ? No... It will make a much better video than stage show," declared the <i>Telegraph</i> . "Lynn Seymour's hilariously tipsy stepmother totters like a parody of Patti LaBelle in <i>Sunset Boulevard</i> ... deserves to be a popular success," smiled the <i>Mail</i> . "Unconvincing," sighed the <i>FT</i> . "A winning formula... The entire cast is first-rate," sang <i>The Times</i> . "Complexity, subtlety and surprises," cheered the <i>Standard</i> .	Thomas Sutcliffe felt "the effect is rather like attending a reunion party at which you have no share in the common history... everyone around you wars with laughter, leaving you mildly baffled (and mildly bored)". "A quickstep to the music of time which tramples not only on credibility but on humour," frowned the <i>New Statesman</i> . "Like walking into a <i>Brideshead</i> Revised theme park – only less convincing," grumbled <i>The Times</i> . "An excellent cast cannot make up for the lack of substance," yawned the <i>Mail</i> . "Perfectly faithful, which is more than you can say for most of the characters," declared <i>The Guardian</i> . "After two hours of this luscious production, I stumbled, hinking, back into the harsh reality of today," gloried the <i>Telegraph</i> .	Adam Mars-Jones worried about the film's balance of sympathies but praised it for earning "the great, if back-handed, compliment of being powerful enough to argue with". "A story that could easily have got out of hand. An honourable film, as well as a sensational one," cried <i>The Guardian</i> . "Startling power and compassion," nodded <i>The Times</i> . "There's no sermonising or sentimentalising... Don't miss it," marvelled <i>Time Out</i> . "Harrowingly brilliant performances... it's gruelling but compulsive. Steel yourself, but see it," urged the <i>Telegraph</i> . "I can't fill the vacuum with the slightest sympathy. Nil by mouth maybe, everything by foul mouth," snorted the <i>Standard</i> . "Full of the sort of people you would move to the country to avoid," shuddered the <i>Mail</i> .
Rehearsals were decimated by ill-health. It will undoubtedly deepen and strengthen.	The production values are high and the acting excellent but it's a compression to a far.	Already strewn with awards for acting and direction.

هكذا من الأدب

Delight and disaster in an African diary

The wildlife of Africa still has the power to hold its human observers in thrall, but, says Rory Bremner, who has been visiting conservation projects in Tanzania and Kenya, ill-conceived and disconnected foreign aid projects threaten animals and human beings alike by causing avoidable ecological breakdown

As I left home again for Africa last month, my thoughts were of England. The country shifting beneath my feet, old certainties (the monarchy, the Union) everywhere called into question, me starting to get my head round my next set of programmes for Channel 4, and my racehorse (or the leg of him I own) apparently now so lazy that he was having Sky TV plumped into his stable so he could watch the Ryder Cup, with a direct line to the bookies should he fancy a few bob on Rocco to beat Tiger Woods in the singles.

Such thoughts are left far behind as our Piper Aztec touches down on a dusty tarmac at a landing-strip in Southern Tanzania and Africa wraps us once again in its sweet, dry heat – and a cloud of dust.

It's a break from home, but it's also a mission. In a way. For the second time this year, I'm visiting projects supported by the wildlife conservation charity Tusk Trust, whose involvement ranges from funding equipment and assisting African community projects to aiding the relocation of rhinos and other endangered species to reserves across Kenya.

I first encountered wildlife during the 1995 England Cricket Tour to South Africa – not amongst the players, but many miles away in the game reserves of Londolozi and Phinda Nylala. There, at dusk one evening, time stood still as we waited silently, aware that we were not alone. In a thicket in front of us, the crackling of twigs betrayed the presence of an animal. After what seemed like an eternity, the branches parted and a lone elephant emerged and strolled slyly and silently on its way, utterly impervious to our presence. As we moved off, tears were streaming down my cheeks.

Guides will tell you that these immense creatures have a deep and compassionate gentleness. They will return many months later to the spot where a relative has died, flicking tenderly at the bones as if trying to nudge it back to life. A slightly longer tale tells of a drunk man falling into an alcoholic slumber and awaking to find himself covered in twigs, having been gently "buried" by an elephant.

Since that first experience, my curiosity about the animals and the people has become passionate, and I've come to love the place. Days spent driving humbly across plains and dusty paths in a Land Rover, each bend promising an encounter with giraffe, impala, elephant or zebra; the seemingly inevitable hour lying awake in the middle of every night, dry-mouthed, heart pounding, listening to lion or hyena in the distance, both hoping and fearing they might come closer; the sheer weight of that night sky, heavy with a thousand stars and deafeningly silent except for a slap of fish or a flutter of birdwing breaking the still river's surface, or a single distant bird-cry; the sound of fish-eagles and cicadas in the shimmering heat of an African afternoon.

Flying between Tanzania and Kenya – from the Serengeti to the Mara, say – is a hassle. You have to fly to a border point and clear customs crossing into Kenya to clear customs again and head back into the hush. Such travel may broaden the mind; it certainly lengthens the queues.

As we arrive at Kilimanjaro airport there are two other planes on the tarmac. Amongst the five people boarding the Air Tanzania jet is one white man. Tall, with a blond mane and a shambling gait. Bet it's someone I know, I joke to myself. As he

half-turns to climb the steps I see his face. Bloody hell, it's Martin Clunes. For some reason I keep bumping into him in Dean Street, in Soho, but Kilimanjaro airport on a quiet Sunday morning is stretching coincidence a little further. As it happens he's been filming the story of Nina the elephant, relocated through the auspices of the Born Free Foundation from a lonely zoo life to Mkomazi reserve.

Each time I return I learn more about the secret life of animals and plants: how the whistling thorn is inhabited by ants who emerge if the tree is being eaten to bite the predator; how other acacias first grew thorns to deter giraffe from eating them, and now produce an unpalatable tannin if a thick-tongued animal begins to munch away; not only that – this reaction is communicated to all other trees in the surrounding area, forcing the predator to move off to another part of the bush.

One piece of bush lore suggests that to keep baboons out of your camp, you should place a plastic snake in a bag near where they play; their curiosity will thus be rewarded with a nasty shock.

A friend tried this at his camp in the Tsavo park in Kenya and found the bag attracted the attentions of a vervet monkey, who opened it, looked inside and promptly fainted. Clambering back onto its feet, it had another look – and promptly fainted again.

The story reminded me of the tale of Falklands penguins, who were so fascinated by aircraft during the war that they would longingly watch the planes as they flew directly over their heads, causing the unfortunate creatures to topple straight over backwards with a slushy thud. Unable to right themselves ("aw, bloody hell, I've gone again..."), they would have to wait for an army patrol whose job it was to return penguins to the upright position.

The very first morning in Tanzania presents a rare sighting. Drawn by a sudden cloud of dust in the distance, we find a herd of buffalo holding two lionesses at bay. As we watch a buffalo is brought down. To all intents and purposes it's dead meat. But no. Mounting a final show of defiance, the buffalo charge the lions again, causing them to retreat. Amazingly, after half a minute of this stand-off, the stricken buffalo clambers to its feet and rejoins the herd. Lions



The writer with Tana the cheetah in Kenya

0 Buffalo 1, and as John Motson might say, no, as he undoubtedly would say, you don't see that very often. Desmond. The lionesses wander off, and from a little further away we see three small creatures bound towards them: cubs, stumpy-pawed, tumbling and frolicking before nestling against their mothers in the shade.

There is no doubt that camping out in the bush attracts a particular type of person. Overflying Ruaha in the Tusk plane, looking for poachers, we spotted a Landrover and tent; on landing at dusk, we found a young white couple with two very small kids sitting quite happily by their tent in the darkness, listening for the leopard prowling around a hundred yards away. No minibar, no room service, no executive trouser-press, nothing. Tsk!

Amongst these bush people are wildlife film-maker Simon Trevor and sculptor Robert Glen, whose magnificent installation of mustangs dominates the a plaza in Dallas. Glen lives in a tent a few hundred yards from the tent of his pupil and partner, artist Susan Stolberger, and 30 minutes drive into the bush from the near-

est camp. There is a small ranger post which they fund a mile or so away, but apart from that, nothing beside remains.

As the stars come out on the first night in camp, to be joined by a glorious rising full moon, we listen to stories of those who live here. Dismissive of the "two-year wonders" who come to Dar es Salaam, work for a western company and return home having learnt little and understood less, Geoffrey Fox is a 38-year wonder with a lodge camp in Ruaha National Park. He will tell you about tea-growing and bush lore, the old days and the new challenges. And still, as he did on our first morning, walk slap into an elephant while walking sleepily to breakfast, blinded by the low early sun.

This year his story is both a tragedy and a scandal.

The Ruaha river, the life-blood of Southern Tanzania, is drying up in the middle of the dry season – for the fourth year running (or indeed not running). And, what's more, it's happening a month earlier every year.

Poor rains are partly to blame, but the most threatening cause lies upriver, where foreign-aid money is following up the creation of two huge rice-field developments in the Ruaha's catchment area with a third paddyfield development at Madibira, based on a feasibility project done years ago.

The river below – and the wildlife living in the Ruaha National Park – depend on a swamp in the river's catchment area. The swamp acts as a natural dam. In the rainy season it absorbs water like a sponge and helps prevent flooding; in the dry season it gradually releases it to prevent the river drying up.

As water is diverted for the rice field project, the swamp has dried out and become compacted by up to 1.5 million grazing cattle. The result is a natural catastrophe that has to be seen to be believed.

Flash floods in rainy season and, last month, long before the next rains are due: the pitiful sight of hippo and crocodiles crowded in stagnant pools, while a few yards upstream hundreds of dead fish lie rotting on the surface. Countless others fight vainly for air, flapping around, open-mouthed and upside-down.

These – imagine it – were the pools where the Fox children would fish 20 years ago, catching tiger-fish weighing up to 15 pounds, retrieved by whichever brother's turn it was (usually the youngest) to have the crocs.

The site is no stranger to tragedy: in the mid-50s a timber merchant called Carl Hussman built a bridge at the spot and was so pleased with the result that he immediately drove off the side of it and drowned. His death is remembered sadly by the locals, rather less so by the crocodiles to whose diet he made a welcome addition. (Unlike Hussman, they often live beyond 50.)

Now the stinking pool is a sight that should shame those responsible for the Madibira rice field project.

But there is a further twist, an economic irony that may yet save the river and its ecosystem: For downstream are the Mtera and Kidatu hydroelectric dams, which provide 80 per cent of Dar es Salaam's electricity. Already the power cuts have started in that city and huge generators have had to be bought.

Thus foreign aid money finances the rice paddy project upstream while crippling the (foreign aid financed) hydro project downstream. It is a crisis conservationists in Ru-

aha are desperate to prevent, quite literally, come hell or high water.

But the swamp tragedy is a metaphor for African politics: for everyone you meet who tells you one story, you will meet someone the next day who contradicts or ridicules it. In a continent whose main currency is rumour, your brain soon becomes saturated. What may be a flash flood of information and gossip at lower level soon dries to a trickle higher up as armies

of bureaucrats grind out their patch, leaving dust and confusion in their wake.

But this is Africa. Returning through the fumes and the bustle of Nairobi, I reflect on the contrasts and ironies that frustrate and bewitch me: breathtaking beauty and pitiful squalor, Man and Nature, life and death. I know I'll be back. And as I observe Messrs Blair and Hague in their natural habitat, I'll think of snakes and baboons, lion and buffalo... and Martin Clunes.

When foreign aid goes wrong: helpless fish, dead and dying, below Huffman's bridge, Ruaha National Park, Tanzania

Photograph: Rory Bremner

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BD 11/97

A little late, but welcome to the modern world, Mr Hague



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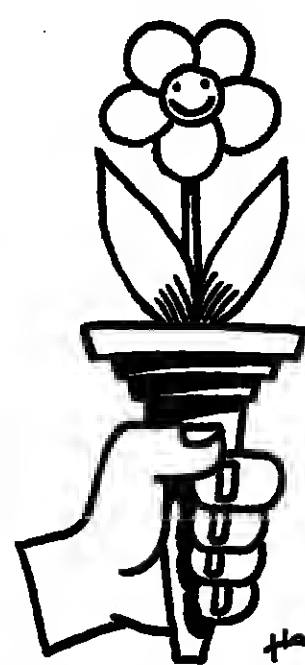
Let's welcome the Tories to the modern world. They might not like it – "the world that is" as Michael Portillo so colourfully put it – but it seems to be the only one we have. It's where the votes, the problems, the political opportunities are. It is the same world that is to which Labour painfully had to reintroduce itself. There may be pockets of Surrey, Herts and Bucks or even function rooms in Blackpool that you can pretend are forever England, your England, but they are too small a political base for the Tories. If they are ever going to grow back to potency they needed to make a leap out of the ghettos of intolerance this week. And, Norman Tebbit notwithstanding, they just about did. This is good news for Britain: we need a plural system, and that means, we need Tories.

William Hague's speech yesterday was pretty potboiling stuff, addressed to the tribe rather than the country. Besides, the leader's speech was overshadowed by Michael Portillo's dénouement on the conference fringe. He is too resourceful and ambitious a politician to have stayed away for long but the manner of his return was dramatic. Personal humiliation of the kind he suffered in the early hours of May 2nd is clearly good for the soul. He took centre stage with an extraordi-

nary volte-face. The queen (Maggie and all her works) is dead. Long live the (liberal, tolerant, compassionate) king. Why, next he may be heard offering a prayer for Jacques Santer.

Though Norman Tebbit rarely shows much Christian charity, he would presumably allow that his prized (mono-)cultural inheritance includes the New Testament. One of its most teasing stories, to non-believers and believers alike, is that of the prodigal son. This week the Conservatives came back to the fold, and repented. There they had been for all those years, boozing with ideologies, stripping down to their economically liberal underwear. They were indeed crazy years. During them Lady Thatcher and John Major attempted to defend a Toryism that had become an unstable permissive in matters of business but morally censorious of choice in matters of sex, child-rearing and household formation. It was not the creed of modern Britons around them.

This week reality dawned – or at least a glimmering of consistency. No one quite had the courage to point out that liberalising changes in attitude and social practice occurred while Mrs Thatcher was on watch, that she is "responsible" (in so far as politicians have anything to do with social change). But at least the Tories now



recognise what Michael Portillo coyly called the "new norms" are here to stay. Gays will not go back into the closet. Women will not be driven out of jobs nor will they relinquish their freedom to choose whether and with whom they

have children. William Hague came near to accepting that freedom is indivisible. If you value the freedom of consumers, of patients and parents, you must also prize – however much you might regret the consequences – their freedom to divorce or set up with a same-sex partner.

All this amounts to heroic redirection. Historically Conservatism prospered by resisting change, in postulating ideal types of behaviour. Often it was hypocrisy on stilts. Aristocrat Tories condemned in the working class behaviour they applauded in their drawing rooms. Tory MPs were often the last people to observe the precepts they tried to legislate for others. Lately, the Tories have made themselves into the party of an anachronistic definition of the family. This has meant they became social whingers, constantly complaining that people kept making choices they don't like. (These people of course included ministers, their ex-mistresses and prime minister's children, which made the Tory message all the more unintelligible.) William Hague himself still feels the need to bow his knee to the approved form of matrimony but, intellectually and politically, he sees how his party had driven up a cul-de-sac. It is now on its way back down. And he (we assume) enjoyed some sex before marriage in Blackpool this week.

But this will be a slow and difficult political conversion. Listening to Mr Hague's speech was to hear the grating sound of a man trying to play two ends against the middle. This was a leader prepared only up to a point to beckon his people back to the middle ground – he certainly made free with the tribe's totems and tokens. So we had compassion and tolerance – code for welcoming gays – but also a paean of praise to the "traditional family". Mr Hague wants more Tory women MPs, but would not forego a gratuitous assault on a Labour minister, Harriet Harman, based largely on her gender. Mr Hague lauds free trade but within a few sentences aligns himself with hard-line nationalism, the kind that wants protection. Mr Hague, in other words, has not yet entirely abandoned the shibboleths he needs to shed.

And yet the Conservatives deserve half a round of applause – by which we mean not the sound of one hand clapping, but two hands clapping, slowly. They really did advance this week. What next? Imagine a line-up at Brighton in 1998 of young men who had doffed their pinstripes and, some of them, come out of sassy go-ahead career women... That would start to look like a Tory party capable of giving New Labour a run for its money. We'd like to see it happen.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Greener than thou

Sir: It is good that the Foreign Office now treats impending climate change and sea-level rise seriously. ("The paradise isles on the edge of disaster", 10 October), after decades of indifference to global environmental crises, such as tropical deforestation, over-fishing and species extinction.

However, the UK is in danger of losing influence over other industrial nations as its pronouncements on their responsibility to cut greenhouse gas emissions take on an unattractive "holier than thou" tone. The exhortation of the Foreign Office Minister Derek Fatchett that Australia, Japan and the USA must agree tough reduction targets at the crucial climate change summit in Kyoto in eight weeks time may be right, but it would carry far more weight if the Government spent less time trumpeting its own (welcome) carbon dioxide reduction target of 20 per cent from 1990 levels by 2010 and started implementing domestic programmes to reach that target.

There are a number of initiatives that must be undertaken in Britain, which would bring definite social and economic benefits, and yet none featured in either Labour's first Queen's Speech or its first Budget.

Transport is responsible for over a fifth of carbon dioxide pollution, and emissions are rising rapidly as traffic levels soar. Why, then, no legislation along the lines of the Road Traffic Reduction Bill, drafted by Friends of the Earth, the Green Party and Plaid Cymru, and sponsored by Cynog Dafis MP? Why no tougher energy-efficiency standards, for buildings as well as vehicles?

A nationwide home energy conservation programme is an essential prerequisite for lowering carbon emissions. And it would help eradicate the scandal of fuel poverty in this country, suffered by 15 million people, prevent some 30,000 people from dying every year because they are cold and damp as their homes leak energy and waste warmth, while creating between 25,000 and 50,000 jobs. Why was the windfall tax not used to kickstart such investment?

The long-term funds for such a programme, for building up a modern public transport network and for developing clean renewable energy supplies such as offshore wind, wave and solar power, can easily be found. End company car, and free fuel and parking, subsidies worth £550m a year, along with the £1.5bn tax breaks given to oil companies annually to find more oil.

Above all, introduce a graduated carbon tax across the European Union so that the dirtiest fuels are taxed the most, and the cleanest the least, and commensurately reduce taxes on labour. Not only would carbon emissions fall, but so would the price of employment, creating hundreds of thousands of jobs across the EU.

Why also does the Treasury resist ending the farcical anomaly whereby energy-saving materials are VAT taxed at 17.5 per cent whereas energy use is taxed at 5 per cent?

Simply lecturing other nations about their obvious failings is no way to prepare for Kyoto. CHARLES SECRETT

Director
Friends of the Earth
London N1

Sir: Bill Quattrill (letter, 7 October) is right that a tropical timber boycott may not be the best choice for the environment and that we should try to ensure that timber comes from well-managed sources.

However there is still much forest management that fails to meet even the most basic environmental and social criteria. The not-for-profit organisation the Forest Stewardship Council now offers an international scheme for ensuring forest management meets high standards and provides an easily recognised tick-tree logo for the products. The FSC provides the perfect choice for people who want reassurance that they can buy wood products without contributing to the sort of shocking disasters that we can now observe in Indonesia. STEVE HOWARD
Senior Forests Officer
WWF-UK
Godalming, Surrey

Royal technophobia

Sir: On your centre pages (9 October) you publish a major article by Rupert Cornwell, a six-column cartoon and three trenchant letters all condemning the remarks of Norman Tebbit on the subject of Britain's multi-ethnicity. Well done!

Immediately above stands your leading article, in which you attack the Queen for inflexibility and a lack of "democratic understanding" for what you describe as a self-deprecating admission her resistance to information technology.

I should have thought that Her Majesty's extremely positive endorsement of the multi-ethnic, multi-faith character of this country – which, by happy coincidence was reported on the same day as Norman Tebbit's regrettable outburst – demonstrates both her flexibility and her responsiveness to the mood of modern society. I also believe that the Queen's views on the subject of race-relations are very much more interesting to most of her subjects than her views on information technology.

JENNY BANKS
Birmingham

Sir: Your leader of 9 October is wrong in stating that Queen Mary never used a telephone. As she herself recorded, the King, in London, kept her, in Balmoral, fully informed by telephone about the government crisis of 1931. You also omitted to mention that the Princess Royal's comments about the use of computers in



The Australian kangaroo – culled by trained shooters to spare it a worse death

Kangaroo meat

Sir: In case your readers gain a false impression about the killing of kangaroos and the processing of their meat from your report "Ostrich, kangaroo and other exotic meats off the menu" (9 October) it is important to point out that the sale of kangaroo meat

is a by-product of Australia's necessary annual cull.

Because of the dramatic increase in the kangaroo population we need to control their numbers to protect the fragile environment and the many other native species it sustains.

Last year 3.1 million kangaroos were culled from a popu-

lation of more than 50 million of the four main species. In addition to protecting the environment, the cull saves millions of kangaroos from dying from thirst and starvation during Australia's frequent droughts.

The government cull is carried out by professional shooters who are licensed and must

comply with strict laws. The processing of the meat is subject to controls which are as rigorous and strictly policed as any of the more traditional meat industries in Australia.

NEIL BLEWETT
High Commissioner
Australian High Commission
London WC2

schools were endorsed by none other than Bill Gates.

Technophobia certainly does not, as you suggest, run in the Royal Family. Queen Victoria, in contrast to her Prime Minister, Melbourne, was an enthusiast for the newly invented passenger railway; her husband, Albert, probably did more than any single person last century to promote innovation; and her eldest son, the Prince of Wales, was quick to endorse the motor car. The Queen's father, later George VI, learned to fly in 1919, a time when it was a highly risky business.

DONALD FOREMAN
Secretary
The Constitutional Monarchy Association
London E4

Sir: Jojo Moyes, reporting the Queen's speech to Pakistan's parliament (9 October), suggests that the Queen and many others of the not so young feel bewildered and even frightened by the fast-changing world we live in.

The point is that we harbour a healthy scepticism towards all things new and a desire a proper evaluation and discussion of new ideas and new technologies before adopting them. Information technology is being in-

troduced simply because it is there and because we must make sure we are not left out. To this day there has been no evaluation of the costs and benefits.

Why should I spend the resources on making my home into a local area network (repeated on the same page) to be able to e-mail fridge@home to see I need milk when I can just open the door and ascertain that fact. The possibility is absolutely fascinating, but the costs seem to grossly outweigh any benefits.

K V MOLLER
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire

Circumcision victims

Sir: It does seem ironic that the foreskins of newly circumcised boys are being harvested by a commercial company and processed to provide skin banks for replacement surgery ("Scientists plan market in spare body parts", 8 October), while at the same time a growing band of unhappy men are seeking to restore the foreskins which were removed without their consent in infancy.

It has always been a mystery why circumcision, which, as the medical profession admits, has no medical justification, should

still be so prevalent. I wonder how the unwilling donors will feel about it when they are old enough to know what has happened? Does the benefit to those with foot ulcers justify the mutilation of small boys?

R B WARBURTON
Flinwick, Bedfordshire

People vs parties

Sir: Lynne Armstrong (Letters, 7 October) writes that the German electoral system, the Additional Member System, "can combine proportionality... with the constituency link".

This is very seductive in theory, but in practice it does not work. The regional lists tend to dilute the constituency link of the constituency MPs in two ways. The constituencies would have to be much larger under AMS, in Germany often having as many as 300,000 voters each. Also, many constituency MPs are also on a regional list. Michael Portillo (and even worse) Neil Hamilton could have got back into Parliament through the back door created by the regional lists. It would be impossible for the electorate to kick out any MP whom the party wanted in Parliament.

The system which most effectively combines proportionality with the constituency link is the system used in Ireland, the Single Transferable Vote. Constituents can choose which MP in a multi-member constituency they prefer to represent them. MPs, and candidates

from the same party are in competition with each other for the same votes. In the last four Irish general elections, two-thirds of the TDs (MPs) from the Fianna Fail party who lost their seats lost to other Fianna Fail candidates.

It is very difficult for the parties to control who gets elected, as there are no safe seats. The people of Tynon would not even have needed Martin Bell to remove Neil Hamilton – he would have been defeated by other Tory candidates in the same area.

ALEX MACFIE
Aberavenny, Gwent

Lecture by Rowse

Sir: I am sure there are many people with memories of A L Rowse (obituary, 6 October; letter, 9 October).

My encounter with him occurred at Putworth House in the early Seventies. My wife and I spotted him gazing earnestly at a Fuseli painting. Being a fellow Cornishman, I introduced myself. He launched (I swear I saw a howl) into a very loud and lengthy lecture on the wonders of Fuseli, interspersed with naughty snippets about Lord Egremont.

Within five minutes the fairly crowded room was empty; even my wife disloyally snuck off. I was left stranded with him for a whole hour. I still have not quite recovered. PETER DRYDEN
Brighton, East Sussex

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Last week in this space I asked for thoughts about the changing news agenda – the extent to which "new" news about science, culture, health, the environment and so on, deserved to elbow its way to the level of "old" news, of the politics-plus-diplomacy sort. The letters back were generally subtle and thoughtful.

Jane Huber, a former eye surgeon from Cambridge, wrote in favour of the new agenda: "There was a time when I read newspapers and saw only photographs of middle-aged white men, read only articles written by middle-aged white men, about the power struggles of middle-aged men, white and otherwise." There is a gender question here, she argues: "Traditional news is masculine and about men in power. The kind of news I want to read is about things that affect me: the survival of the planet, women's success or failure in Equal Opportunities cases, the things I should feed my children, what's going on in Europe, what will hit us next from the US."

Another reader, Clare Prout from London, agreed: "I'd like to support your idea that environmental and wider social issues are just as much news as the sleeping mumbings in the House of Lords. In many ways, these less 'hard' items are proto-news."

Dr Tony Daniels from Cleveland, while applauding the "clean new layout" of the paper, suggested that we are becoming less a newspaper than "a daily news magazine" and adds: "You are heavily biased to the arts, fashion and the south-east of England in your 'news' coverage. Science and technology rarely get a look-in."

Well, we are upping the science coverage – today's page three being an example – but the "magazine" criticism came from other readers too. Colin Parker from Tewkes-

bury, for example, said he regarded the news items as being "ton magazine", if I can invent such a word... I get the impression that some stories are saved for a day when a page can be filled with stories that loosely come under the same heading." Quite a few, of you agree with Mr Parker and Dr Daniels.

Another London reader, Nicholas Maxwell, put the opposing view: "By presenting the information the way you have chosen, you break down an unhelpful, and possibly unreal, division between hard and soft stories. The grouping of pieces 'gives me what I need to make the links between different but related stories and makes me think more about the pieces rather than just reading them and passing on.'"

That, of course, is exactly the intention of the new paper, even if we don't always succeed. The editorial and commercial dilemma is how to balance the traditional agenda with a grouping and choice of stories that tease out the new agenda while not losing too many readers on the way. If there is a pattern, it is that the offended readers tend to be older and the enthusiasts younger. E-mails, interestingly, are running more heavily "pro" than handwritten letters.

When *The Guardian* launched in 1983, it managed to lose 100,000 sales in a year. Amiable though our shareholders are, I rather suspect that I would not be permitted to do quite that badly – and so far (phew), sales are well above, not below, our base figures before the new paper. But it is of course easier to lose readers than to win new ones, particularly since we don't have sugar-daddy money. So if you are enjoying the paper, tell a friend!

Andrew Marr

QUOTE UNQUOTE

I'm going to reinvigorate this party and I'm not going to be derailed from it by criticism from armchair generals – William Hague, *Conservative leader*

Whatever happened to serious political thought? Surely it is not confined to old fogies and matrons in sensible shoes – Lord Tebbit, *Conservative peer*

The Tory Parliamentary Party had a collective nervous breakdown. There is no other way of describing it – Kenneth Clarke, *ex-chancellor, explaining defeat*

I couldn't cope with the fans any more. I felt that their adulation was misplaced. They were spending money on expensive performances when they should have been buying clothes for their backs. It made me uneasy – Dame Joan Sutherland, *operatic singer*

Step by step Unionists are being conditioned to become accustomed to "Irishness" rather than "Britishness" to prepare them for their intended destination – Peter Robinson, *deputy leader of the Democratic Unionist Party*

Half of me is impulsive, half of me is analytical. Part of me is evil, part of me is good. It is a struggle every day. Maybe it's just me – Michael Douglas, *actor*

Every Government gets unpopular. When they turn on Tony Blair it will be unbelievably vicious. People will be shocked by the ferocity of it – Ken Livingstone, *Labour MP*

How had they put up with the ancien régime so long?

DAVID
AARONOVITCH
A TORY CONVERSION

For 80 years of courtship and marriage, John Marshall of East Kilbride believed that his wife, Ina, was the same age as he was. Now, 80 years is a long time to believe anything; most of us simply do not get the opportunity. So it can be imagined how bemused the 98-year-old Mr Marshall was, when - on opening birthday cards recently for his 98-year-old wife - he came across a telegram from HM the Queen, congratulating Mrs Marshall on reaching her centenary.

Mrs Marshall was phlegmatic. During the First World War, when the Marshalls were engaged, it had not really been the thing for a wife to be older than her husband. So the young Ina had adjusted the figures. But time and fashion had moved on, allowing Mrs Marshall to comment that "it doesn't really matter much now, does it?" John simply said that it was a little hard to take in.

I bet it was. And there are many who were here in Blackpool this week who know how John feels. On Thursday evening it was Michael Portillo who played the role of Queen's telegram. He stood up in the ornate Opera House in the Winter Gardens, and told his astonished audience that he was tolerant.

And he wasn't just a weeny bit tolerant, either. He was a lot tolerant. He was tolerant of gays, he was tolerant of single mums, he was tolerant of unconventional families as long as they loved and cherished their kids. And he cared too. He just couldn't work out how it had got around that he hadn't cared. It mystified him, given all the things that he and his colleagues had done. But the bottom line was that he did care.

His audience might have told him how this strange impression had been created. They recalled with great clarity Mr Lilley's assault on ladies who had children with men to whom they were not married. And what about all those speeches exhorting scroungers, "bogus" asylum seekers, or how the welfare state had sapped enterprise, or how it was better for the wealthy to decide themselves how to dispose of their riches.

rather than be forced to pay it in taxes to pay for the caring services?

Like the Labour Party a decade earlier, the suited and grey-haired delegates listening to their hero were being asked to stand on their political heads. As socialists had been required to jettison the comforting childhood toys of penal taxation, collective ownership and trades union power, now Tories were being faced off with the consequences of their own defeat.

Sitting there among them I saw many of the same variations of response that I had witnessed (and indeed, shared) when Labour was called upon to change. First there were the (few) people that had really believed in tolerance and caring all along: gay Tories and folk like that. The mystery with them was how they had put up with the *ancien régime* for so long. Then there were those who had had no very strong conviction, probably having been relaxed themselves in private, who seemed relieved to see the intolerant past go. Both groups applauded.

On the other side were men and women who were openly disgusted by Portillo's words, and felt their most cherished beliefs to be under assault from one they always considered to be their standard-bearer. They shifted angrily in their seats and muttered their dissent. Slightly less angry were a group who felt very uncomfortable, but thought that if Portillo said it, then at the least it was worth considering.

But my favourites - at least one-third of the hall - were those who had vehemently expressed the old, authoritarian view, but - afforded a sudden glimpse of a different, attractive world - jumped instantly and effortlessly from believing X to strongly endorsing the need for Y.

Mr Portillo, of course, knew what he was talking about. The juggernaut of social and economic change had run over some of the Tories' favourite doctrines, and change was a necessity. But, as ever, change had to be consistent with principle; only Labour changes because of a desire to court popularity. So hardly had the crowd drifted out of the Opera House before strenuous efforts were being made to reconcile the old (poofs and scroungers) with the new (life choices and caring).

The best of all came from the pen of Mr Peregrine Worsthorne, writing in the *Mail*. Perhaps, he suggested, toleration of - say - gay marriage, would civilise homosexual culture, and lead to a lessening of gay promiscuity. Thus the original end (conventional morality) could be better served through the changed means. And it was not as though he didn't have a respectable role model, either. "This is not a question," he went on, "of learning to love it. It is one of learning to live with it and make the best of it. If the Queen can become reconciled, however reluctantly and uncertainly to the modern world, who am I to lag behind?"

I have to say that I love this process. While I am not a fan of moral relativism, and dislike those who cannot behave properly, I thoroughly approve of people changing their minds. And it is a testimony to the human spirit that we insist that however much we change our minds, we remain ourselves unchanged.

Anyway, Mrs Marshall usually ends up being right when she avers that "it doesn't really matter much now, does it?"



Watching her man: Ffion Jenkins at the Tory party conference yesterday

Photograph: Tom Pilsto

Ffion Jenkins: a model Tory fiancée

As the Tories struggled to come to terms with their loss last week in Blackpool, there was one unmitigated good news story.

"I've become the man who accompanied Ffion Jenkins to the Conservative Party conference," William Hague remarked mock-ecstatically as the photographers jostled for just one more shot of his glamorous fiancée. Young, fresh-faced, full of vim and relatively photogenic, the opposition leader's future wife is just what the Tories need at the moment. And they have milked her for everything she has.

Well, perhaps not quite everything. Bear in mind that Miss Jenkins, 29, is an Oxford graduate who used to play clarinet with the National Youth Orchestra of Wales and who wrote an MPhil thesis, entirely in Welsh, on the English bard Thomas Gray. Bear in mind also that she gave up her job as a top-flight civil servant after her engagement in March - she met Mr Hague when she was his private secretary at the Welsh Office - and has recently become director of operations at the Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts.

Now, though, she stands mute beside her man. "There are no words from Ffion," explains her friend and press minder for the week, Nickie Durbin. Cherie Booth does not give interviews, she adds, so neither does Ffion. The energies of the political wife, it seems, must be devoted entirely to the twin tasks of looking immaculate and keeping schtum. Every word which passes her lips must be carefully vetted for the tell-tale traces of the "power behind the throne" syndrome.

There is something slightly different about Ffion, though. Take the scene in the Imperial

Hotel, Blackpool, on Tuesday evening. Around 8.30pm, the foyer filled with an array of long lenses and flash guns which would have done any Hollywood star proud.

The reason? They had been called upon to record the wonder of Ffion's new frock. It has to be said that this rather natty mini-skirted black lace number by Neil Cunningham had been the cause of much speculation over a number of days. It had been rumoured - falsely, according to party sources - to have cost £2,000. But even so, the event did mark a departure in political spin-doctoring. Cherie's clothes may provoke a quite unwarranted amount of comment, but at least her minders do not invite the press along specifically to photograph her latest outfit.

Ffion, of course, is younger than any party leader's other half has ever been. But still, the occasion was a bizarre one. After keeping the "photographers waiting for 45 minutes, the pair appeared on the stairs and stood so stiffly that onlookers would have been forgiven for believing that they had never met before. Urged on by the crowds, they put their arms shyly around one another, but a request for Mr Hague to kiss his fiancée was greeted by the reply, "You'll have to wait until the wedding for that."

Despite the apparent awkwardness - on one of her earliest photocalls, she even had to guide his arm around her waist - the week has been a great success for her. As well as the photocall for her dress, she has been on show greeting Baroness Thatcher, visiting a children's play park and attending between 40 and 50 receptions with Mr Hague.

But according to Miss Durbin, a former Conservative

FRAN
ABRAMS
A STAR IS BORN
IN BLACKPOOL

press officer and friend of Miss Jenkins' from Cardiff who has taken on the job of temporary minder along with Sally Hendry, wife of the former High Peak MP Charles Hendry, she is enjoying the role. "Her priority is to back her fiancé, her future husband," she says. "She's a very strong woman, a very intelligent woman, and she takes it all in her stride. She's a normal person like you and me. Six months ago nobody knew her, and suddenly she got engaged to the Secretary of State for Wales. The sheer volume of interest has been surprising, but I think she has coped admirably."

Meanwhile, Mr Hague seems to have a penchant for saying the wrong thing where his fiancée is concerned. "I like women so much that I've even decided to marry one," he told a meeting of Conservative women the other night.

Fortunately the party faithful are not shaken by gaffes such as this, and they seem to regard their leader's engagement as a wholly positive development. They have taken Ffion to their hearts, just as the press have. "She has been very touched by how people have treated her,

both the representatives and the Conservative Party as a whole," says Nickie Durbin.

There had been grumbling in some quarters about the fact that the couple were to share a suite at the Imperial during the conference - Lady Thatcher was rumoured to have said they should have got married first. But the party in its new liberal mode does not seem worried. In fact, the stories helped to quell the malicious speculation that Hague's unexpected engagement two weeks before the general election was announced might have been rather too convenient, or even that he was gay.

As far as the party is concerned, Ffion is 100 per cent positive. "She's young and vital and she's just what we need," one Tory lady explained. "After all, it is 1997."

The fact that their leader's partner must remain silent does not worry them. Ffion is said not to talk about politics, even in private. Even Miss Durbin does not know her friend's views. "She isn't a political animal in the way that her husband-to-be is. She is here to support her fiancé."

When it was rumoured that Ffion was at odds with Mr Hague on the issue of Welsh devolution, he claimed they had not even discussed the subject.

For someone with her background, this seems more than a little strange. Her father is Emyr Jenkins, chief executive of the Arts Council of Wales, and her older sister, Dr Manon

Williams, is a key member of the Prince of Wales's staff. As a sentient member of the upper echelons of Welsh society, a former Welsh Office civil servant and the fiancée of a former Secretary of State for Wales, Ms Jenkins might be expected to have thought about devolution in recent months. But even if she does have strongly held views on political issues, she will be expected to keep them to herself in future.

There may be differences between the publicising of Cherie, the high-flying QC wife of the Prime Minister, and Ffion, the potentially equally high-flying fiancée of William Hague, but together their packaging represents a new strand of political culture. Just as we have come to accept that these women are likely to lead separate lives of their own which are quite unconnected to their partners' careers, we are diminishing their public roles.

Glenys Kinnock could continue with her own political activities, although she was sometimes criticised for it. Denis Thatcher could make the odd crass remark in public and swill gin. Ffion Jenkins and Cherie Booth, meanwhile, must spend a fortune on *haute couture* in which to pose for pictures with children and animals. Heaven forbid that they should be allowed to open their mouths. After all, they might cause a scandal by saying something sensible. Let us hope, for their sakes, that their men are worth it.

Year after year, the bitter toll of fathomless deaths

TREVOR
PHILLIPS
POLICING
THE POLICE

If we are going to teach children of all backgrounds to love the historic culture of the British peoples, perhaps we need to pay very careful attention to the bit in the civics syllabus that deals with the glories of the nation's criminal justice system. In particular, we need to work out how to explain to our new Britons why it is that the one thing that the justice system does not appear to deliver is justice.

It deals with lots of criminals. Some of them are in uniform according to the nation's top cop, Sir Paul Condon. It is a system of sorts, in that it has rules and a framework, and moves people from one place to another. But justice? Tell that to the relatives of the 57

people who died in police custody over the 12 months to March 1997, according to Home Office figures released this week. Of the 29 cases where cause of death has been determined, 15 died apparently accidentally, and two by suicide. Depressingly, seven of those were black, continuing a trend of unexplained and inexplicable deaths in custody that has carried on for nearly three decades.

There are too many uncertainties here. Why do they die? How do they die? And how does it come about that year after year, there are new cases, new campaigns, new scandals; yet there is still a real chance that someone arrested for some small offence this weekend can wind up dead by Monday morning?

The tale of Leon Patterson, a young London man, stands for many. I first met Patterson when he was 17. He was already a small-time crook, who was serving his second stretch in a young offender institution. He talked like a pocket philosopher, holding forth on the inevitability of someone of his background ending up in crime, and serving periodic stretches at Her Majesty's pleasure.

Our paths did not cross again until 1992. I learnt that after some years doing exactly as he had predicted, he had

been found dead in a police cell in a small northern town, naked and foaming at the mouth. His blood was daubed all over the walls of the cell, and his skull was fractured. His family were more or less asked to believe that despite having spent the night in a police station, he was high on drugs; had managed to get rid of his clothing and then beaten himself so badly that he died of convulsions. And he did it all so quietly that no one noticed. His sister Stephanie has spent several years at least attempting,

'Why do people die in custody? How do they die? How does it come about that year after year, there are new cases, new campaigns, new scandals?'

to get an explanation even marginally more credible than this. As far as I know she still hasn't had one, and there seems little pressure to establish the truth. No one said Good riddance, but they might as well have done, so little effort seemed to be made to uncover what actually took place.

Of course, it is not only the accused who seem to suffer from a justice deficit. This week, the inquiry set up by Jack Straw into the death of the

teenager Stephen Lawrence began. The inquiry has already made its first effort to break through the wall of silence that protects the boys' killers, by offering effective immunity to anyone who comes forward with information. These are desperate measures, and can only really be contemplated because the system has so dismally failed to deliver anything like justice in this case. Initial investigations seemed to be directed far more at the victim than at his most likely assailants; later inquiries ran

into resistance from the local community, who either wanted to protect the killers, or were too scared of them (or their big brothers) to tell the truth.

The Lawrences' own private attempts to force those who may know something to speak in court were blocked, and even the coroner failed to move things forward. I am sure that an inquiry is needed, but it is hard to see how it will break through the closed culture that has frustrated the

Lawrences at every turn.

And then there are those who languish in jails, despite a mountain of evidence that they are innocent. I have recounted the story of Raphael Rowe before; he was convicted of assault and murder in the so-called M25 murders nine years ago. My doubts about this conviction remain: inconsistent statements, dodgy confessions, flaky witnesses, and discredited forensic evidence all play a part. But what is important is that in this case as in so many others, it is transparently clear that something stinks to high heaven. Yet the process of reviewing the case is complicated, bureaucratic, and expensive. And by past experience, you stand little chance of getting at the truth. You could read into this the lesson that the courts and police are so good and thorough at their work that it is entirely understandable that protests against their results fall. Perhaps; but if you mention Guildford, Birmingham, the Taylor sisters and so on, this argument begins to sound like the feeble rubbish it is.

So far the new Criminal Cases Review Commission looks as though it is taking its work seriously. Good. But does it have the power to investigate properly? Can it, as an examining magistrate can in France, get into a case, order the po-

lice to deliver evidence, requisition new studies, and follow its nose to the real answer? Not really. As I understand it, the Commission is limited to ensuring that the conduct of the case was correct. That's not enough. Someone needs to be able to revisit the investigations and do them again if necessary. We need to act before our faith in the system falls further.

One step is obvious, and widely supported. Stop the police investigating themselves. No one believes their findings, probably unfairly; it is humiliating for decent coppers to find themselves forever under the shadow of suspicion because the system devised for checking their conduct is faulty.

Second, we need to throw off the historic belief that once a court has decided its verdict that should be the end of it, unless a higher court decides another way. New techniques of investigation, new insights into the human mind are constantly offering us greater certainty. There must be new ways found of allowing deeper, thoroughgoing reviews of the decisions of courts of all kinds. Perhaps it would exert a new discipline on all the officers of our courts to get it right. None of this can bring back the dead, but we need to bring the right people to book, if we are going to be a society at ease with ourselves.

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WSPA

Michael Cummings

Arthur Stuart Michael Cummings, cartoonist: born Leeds 1 June 1919; OBE 1983; married (one step-son); died London 9 October 1997.

"The pen is mightier than the sword," a cliché old but true, was dusted off by the late

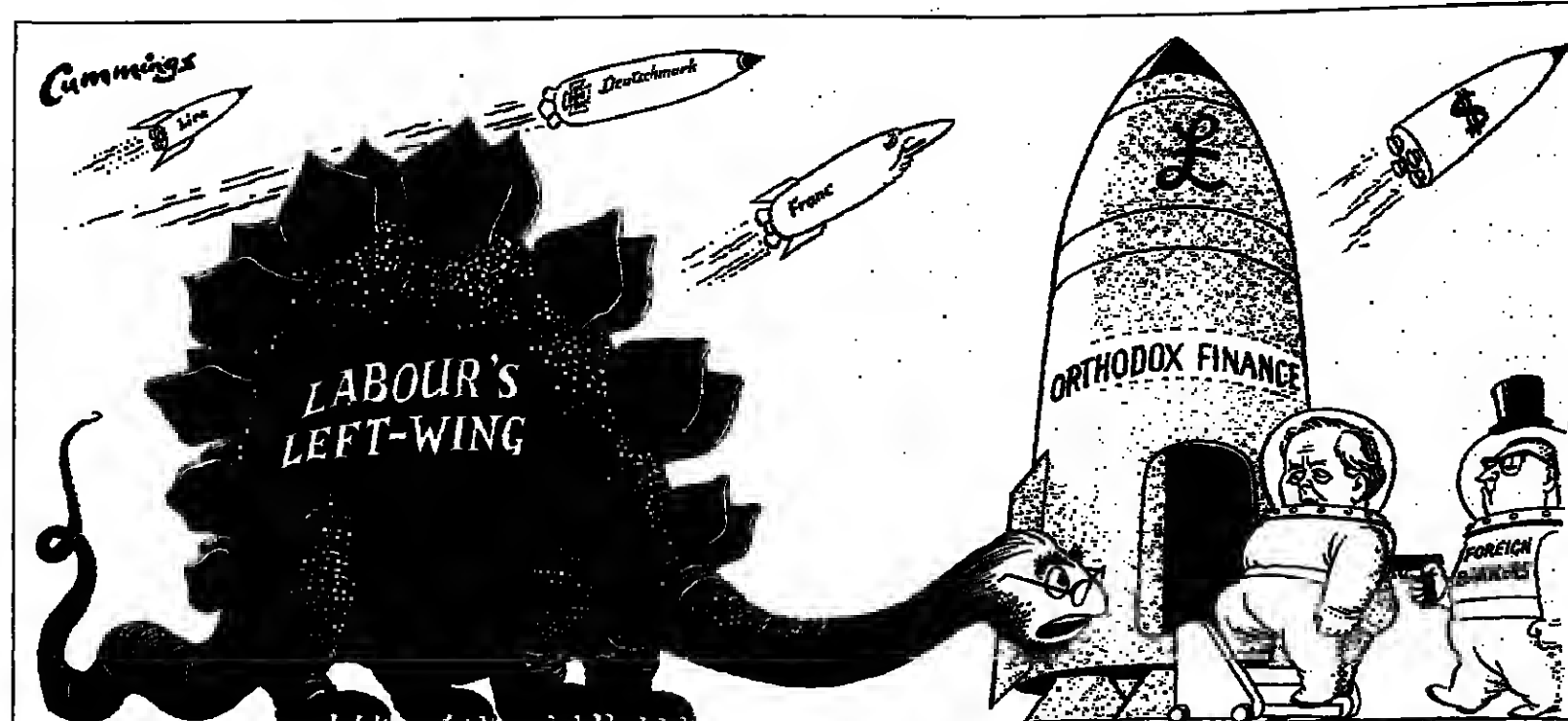
columnist Jean Rook when she did an anniversary interview with her fellow *Daily Express* staffer, Michael Cummings. This was some years ago when Cummings was already on the way to establishing a record for a cartoonist's spell with a single newspaper. By the time he officially retired from *Express*

Newspapers in 1990 he had worked there for over 40 years, and after several years of freelancing for both the *Daily* and the *Sunday Express*, it was not far short of the half-century.

Michael Cummings was born in Leeds in 1919, in the aftermath of the Great War. His father was A.J. Cummings, a political cartoonist of the period who would achieve Fleet Street fame as the political editor of the old *News Chronicle*. Clearly the seriousness of the father was a major influence on the growing boy, who seemed to have an obvious instinct toward drawing.

The young Michael had a good education, starting with The Hall in Hampstead and moving on to Gresham's School in Norfolk. Then he went on to art school, studying at the Chelsea School of Art for three years before he was called up into the Royal Air Force. Able to make use of his artistic ability, the RAF made him a draftsman and he was posted to the Air Ministry. Here he drew aeroplane parts for the duration, and on discharge promptly resumed his arts studies at Chelsea.

Cummings had been aiming



"Get out of that ridiculous costume at once, Harold! Where do you think you are - in the 20th century or something?" 2 December 1964, *Daily Express*

at a career in political cartooning since his school days, and freelanced the odd sketches here and there. His first success came with the left-wing weekly *Tribune* in 1939, a paper that reflected his own political leanings. He returned to the *Tribune* after the war where the editor, Michael Foot, gave him steady work as an illustrator for the book review page. Now and then a political picture would get published, and it became in-

creasingly obvious where Cummings's future lay. In 1948 his father encouraged him to try for a cartooning job on the *Daily Express*, where he had heard there was a whisper that Giles, the country's leading cartoonist, was seeking some relief from the day-after-day drive of turning out the newspaper's regular editorial cartoon. Lord Beaverbrook, the paper's proprietor and a lifelong enthusiast for car-

toons and cartoonists, spotted the young artist's potential and could see that Cummings's style, more serious and more life-like than that of Giles, would make an interesting contrast if the two cartoonists were altered. Unhappily for Cummings, his editor did not at first agree, and sacked the young man after a three month's trial. However, Beaverbrook intervened and insisted that the newcomer was given another chance. He was

satisfied from editor and proprietor down to the reader in the bus. Despite Cummings's caricatures of everyone from the Queen on down, he was appointed OBE in 1983, and by 1989 had published 5,000 cartoons. Many of these were re-published in annual albums which ran from 1954. The first was entitled *These Uproarious Years*.

— Denis Gifford

Professor Alexander Lutsko

Alexander Lutsko, nuclear physicist: born Osipovichi, Belorussia 23 January 1941; Professor of Nuclear Physics, Belarus State University 1987-90; Rector, International Sakharov College of Radioecology, Minsk 1990-97; married Valeria Mamontova (one daughter); died Sierra Nevada, Spain 4 September 1997.

As Founder and Rector of the International Sakharov Institute of Radioecology in Minsk, Alexander Lutsko showed great compassion to that generation of Belarusian children suffering from cancerous illnesses brought about by nuclear radiation following the 1986 Chernobyl disaster. The Sakharov Institute focuses upon research into ionising radiation and the

education of specialists in radiation medicine. This is a field which explores the means of protection from radiation and the development of academic courses in biomedical sciences linked to nuclear physics.

Lutsko was the personification of the "scientist as artist". He had a vision of a new international system of education across the whole former Soviet Union, a system which would develop the individual's personality; the monolithic Soviet university education was a legacy of Marxism he particularly despised. He was proud to be included with Belarusian visual and performing artists at the 1995 Edinburgh Festival. The walls of the Sakharov Institute are today fortified with the works of Belarusian artists. "To be an artist," said Kazimir Male-

vich, "is to be a scientist."

Elena Bonner, Andrei Sakharov's widow, has provided inspiration and support to the institute from the day it opened its doors in November 1992. Its unlikely site is what was a suburban secondary school in an unnoteworthy street, Dolgobrodskaya, next to the enormous complex of the Minsk Tractor Factory billowing chimney smoke. The institute came into being on the wave of the new political ideas and initiatives sweeping Belarus when it gained independence from the Soviet Union in December 1991.

Lutsko was born in 1941, in a small town 100 kilometres south of Minsk. From 1978 to 1987 he worked at the Institute of Biochemistry at the Academy of Sciences of the Far East in Vladivostok. He was a leader

in the Soviet Union's scientific explorations, voyaging through the Sea of Japan, Pacific and Indian Oceans. The dissemination of his reports - he identified nuclear activity as a result of the disposal of Russian submarines - caused surprise and unease to



Lutsko: 'scientist as artist'

Mikhail Gorbachev's administration in its early years.

From 1987 to 1990, as Professor of Nuclear Physics at Belarus State University, Lutsko headed the university's Isotope Laboratory. The creation of the Sakharov Institute owed much to his friendship with his university colleague Stanislav Shushkevich. Together they masterminded the removal of all nuclear weapons from Belarus territory.

The new nation state of Belarus is strategically positioned at the heart of the new post-Berlin-Wall Europe, bordering on Russia, Poland, Lithuania and the Ukraine and equal in size to Scotland, but with a population twice that of Scotland. The two friends worked miracles within a short space of time; Shushkevich was seen as

the ideal political leader in his role as Speaker at the Belarus parliament. In the political upheavals and unrest of the last three years he is now a vigorous member of the Opposition.

I was introduced to Alexander Lutsko through the work of my Kingston University colleague Alan Flowers, who was attracted to my work as Professor of European Cultural Studies and my preparedness to link the faculties of the arts and the sciences. Lutsko participated in a special summer school in 1995, "Bridging the Gap between Science and Art, and between Eastern and Western Europe", in the form of an expedition through 25 gardenscapes in England and Scotland leading to exhibitions and symposia in Edinburgh and St Andrews. He loved the British landscape. I shall never forget

him in reflective mood in the garden of Corbarnet Abbey in Cheshire, or at St Leonard's School in St Andrews en route to the Edinburgh Festival.

Lutsko was fascinated by the direct line between creative genius and insanity, and it was at St Leonard's, at a Demarco European Art Foundation symposium, that he presented his thesis *The Theory of Abnormality*, in which he suggested ways of narrowing the gap between the logical and intuitive ways of investigating the nature of reality. One of his fellow speakers there was Vytautas Landsbergis, the first democratically elected President of the independent state of Lithuania.

Kingston University has given much support to the Sakharov Institute, particularly in the last three years, and a

programme of academic studies has developed to the mutual benefit of both students and teachers. Through this alliance the British Foreign Office "Know-How" Fund has given more to the Sakharov Institute than any other Belarusian academic institute.

All those who went to Alexander Lutsko's apartment in Pushkinskaya will remember his extraordinary hospitality in his large drawing-room, its every inch covered in photographs, artefacts, sea shells and sculpture, recording his love of travel and visual art. He regarded everyone he met as a potential friend.

Lutsko died of sudden heart failure near the summit of a mountain in the Sierra Nevada range at a height over 9,000 feet. — Richard Demarco

Muqimuddin Farooqi

Muqimuddin Farooqi, party activist: born Ambetha, Uttar Pradesh, India 1920; joined Communist Party of India (CPI) 1940, member, national council 1958, central executive 1972, central secretariat 1981; married Vimala Kapoor (one son); died New Delhi 3 September 1997.

Muqimuddin Farooqi was one of the last Indian Communist leaders. He championed the work-

ing-class movement for over four decades, firmly believing that socialism would ultimately prevail. Although the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe affected him deeply, he remained convinced that socialism was a workable science and "could not die".

As national secretary of the Communist Party of India (CPI) for 25 years, Farooqi was respected even by his political adversaries for his integrity.

Soft-spoken and always dressed in a white homespun pyjama and *kurti*, or long shirt, he was probably the most accessible leftist leader in New Delhi, who practised his ideology, living in a couple of dingy, airless rooms above the party office in the heart of the city, eating frugally and always willing to help anyone in trouble.

Age did not affect his political militancy and his last public speech, minutes before he suffered a cardiac arrest, was

against the venality of the Congress Party which supports the federal 15-party United Front coalition government. In contemporary Indian politics Farooqi was a nostalgic reminder that things had not always been so rudderless and shorn of principle.

Muqimuddin Farooqi was born in 1920 in Ambetha, a small town in Saharanpur district in northern Uttar Pradesh state, into a modest Muslim household and educated local-

ly. He moved to the prestigious St Stephen's College in Delhi for his Master's degree, became college president, and joined the Communist Party of India, then fighting the colonial government for independence.

In 1940 he was expelled for successfully organising a university strike against the arrest of Jawaharlal Nehru, then a Congress party leader, and later free India's first prime minister. The British university vice-chancellor forfeited his

MA degree which, much to Farooqi's delight was restored to him at a special convocation 49 years later in 1989.

Thereafter, Farooqi became the first general secretary of the All India Student's Federation and was jailed three times by the colonial government for participating in the Quit India movement launched against the British by Mahatma Gandhi in 1942. In 1964, however, Farooqi opted to remain with the "progressive bourgeoisie"

group, opposing the radical Marxists who split the CPI to form the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the CPM. Soon after, he rose to become a member of the Communist Party's central executive, its highest decision-making body. And, though the CPI joined the federal coalition after general elections last year Farooqi often broke with party discipline, lashing out at the government for its ineptitude and corruption.

— Kuldeep Singh



Farooqi to him, socialism was a workable science

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephoned to 071-293 2001 (24-hour answering machine 071-293 2002) or faxed to 071-293 1000, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

Lectures
TODAY
National Gallery: Rebecca Drew, "Cityscapes (2): Canalotto's Venice", 1.30pm.
Victoria and Albert Museum: Eleanor Townsend, "The Development of Renaissance Mosaic", 2.30pm.
British Museum: Della Pamberton, "Cloth Yourself in Fine Linen: ancient Egyptian textiles", 1.15pm.
TOMORROW
Tate Gallery: Laurence Bradbury, "Spiralling Cycles of Subjects and Styles", 3pm.
National Portrait Gallery: Alfred Bradley, "E.F. Benson, Creator of the Mapp and Lucia Novels", 3pm.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS
The Princess Royal, Patron, Minchingham Centre for the Elderly, opens a new building at the centre, Windmill Road, Minchingham, Stratford, Gloucestershire.
Changing of the Guard
TODAY The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. **TOMORROW** The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 10am. 1ST Battalion Scots Guards mounts the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, (and provided by the Scots Guards).

Birthdays
TODAY Sir Anthony Beaumont-Dark, former MP, 65; Miss Maria Bueno, tennis player, 58; The Hon Sir Adam Butler, former MP and government minister, 66; Sir Bobby Charlton, footballer, 60; Vice Admiral Sir John Coward, Lieutenant Governor of Guernsey, 60; Sir Timothy Daunt, former ambassador to Turkey, 62; Sir Michael Edwards, company chairman, 67; Mr Tony Evans, Head Master, King's College School, Wimbledon, 52; Miss Dawn French, actress and comedienne, 40; Mr Geoffrey Haslam, insurance company director, 83; Sir Denis Henderson, chairman, The Rank Organisation, 65; Mr Charles Jones, grants administrator, CIBT Education Services, UK, 63; Vice Admiral Sir Ian McIntosh, 78; Mr Alan Pascoe, former Olympic hurdler, 50; Lord Prior, chairman, GEC, 70; Mr David Rendall, 49; Mr Jerome Robbins, choreographer, 79; Miss Marsha Singh MP, 43; Air Marshal Sir Michael Sturt, 59; Lord Tordoff, former president of the Liberal Party, 69; Mr Thomas Wheare, headmaster of Bryanston School, 53; Mr Richard Wilson, civil servant, 55; Mr Tony Worthington MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Northern Ireland Office, 56.
TOMORROW Professor Juliet Cheetham, sociologist, 58; Dame Elizabeth Chesterton, architect, 82; Mr Jaroslav Drobný, former tennis player, 76; Mr Anthony Flagg, ambassador to Austria, 57; Mr Kenneth Griffith, actor, writer and documentary film maker, 76; Mr Robert Heron, former director, Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, 70; Mr Jonathan Holborow, editor, the *Mail on Sunday*, 54; Mr Magnus Magnusson, television quizmaster and writer, 68; Dr John Moffatt, former provost, The Queen's College, Oxford, 75; Mr Rick Parfitt, guitar player and singer, 49; Vice-Admiral Sir John Parker, 82; Mr Luciano

Pavarotti, operatic tenor, 62; Miss Angela Rippon, television presenter, 53; Mr David Threlfall, actor, 44; Mr Michael Verney, merchant banker, 85; Mr Nigel Waterson MP, 47; Sir David White, chairman, Nottingham Health Authority, 68.

Anniversaries
TODAY Births: Henry John Heinz, food-products magnate, 1844; Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, writer and lecturer, 1884; Richard Burton (Jenkins), actor, 1925; Deaths: Sir Thomas Wyatt, poet and diplomat, 1542; Leonard "Chico" Marx, comedian, 1961; Jean Cocteau, poet, novelist and playwright, 1963. On this day: The Order of the Bath was constituted, 1399; the title "Defender of the Faith" was conferred on Henry VIII by Pope Leo X, 1521; Peter the Great became Tsar of Russia, 1669; the *Apollo 7* spacecraft, with a crew of three, was launched from Cape Kennedy, 1968. Today is the Feast Day of St Agillbert, St Alexander Sauli, St Bruno the Great of Cologne, St Canice or Kenneth, St Gummarius or Gommaire, St Mary Soledad and St Nectarius of Constantinople. Today is also Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement).
TOMORROW Births: Edward VI, King of England, 1537; James Ramsay MacDonald, statesman, 1866; Ralph Vaughan Williams, composer, 1872; Deshaire Piero della Francesca, painter and writer, 1492; Elizabeth Fry (Gurney), Quaker prison reformer, 1845; Robert Stephenson, civil engineer, 1809; Edith Louisa Cavell, nurse, executed by the Germans, 1915. On this day: the first Morris Minor car designed by Alec Issigonis was produced at Cowley, Oxford, 1948. Today is the Feast Day of St Edwina, St Ethelburga of Barking, Saints Felix and Cyrianus, St Maximilian of Lausanne and St Wilfrid of York.

FAITH & REASON

Incitements to violence within sacred texts

Over the past millennium so-called Christian societies have shamelessly used religion as an excuse for violence, claims a new book - or is it the other way round? John Kennedy examines the evidence.

In his provocative new book, *Does Christianity Cause War?*, David Martin picks a fight with the zoologist Richard Dawkins, who claims that Christian certainty causes war; he insists that such infantism is outdated, along with belief in Father Christmas and the tooth fairy. Professor Martin is a celebrated sociologist of religion, and obviously a Christian believer. He dismisses Dawkins' views as an example of Enlightenment superstition.

Many Christians will tend to side with Dawkins in this Holy War. But the evidence is misleading. Consider, for instance, the First World War memorial to the Machine Gun Corps at Hyde Park Corner. It shows a naked King David, whose bottom gleams up Park Lane. He displays his full frontality down Constitution Hill. He has a very large sword. The inscription reads "Saul has slain his thousands, but David has slain his tens of thousands".

This piece of vainglorious stupidity mocks God and maligns the dead. But it is not specially Christian, although thieves from our sacred texts. And therein lies the problem. Most human governance is ruthlessly tyrannical, and conscripts everything in aid of its projects - especially the sacred. Martin handles this contradiction brilliantly - the zest with which rulers manage and deploy violence, including the Saviour who died by it.

But Martin rather avoids the incitements to violence that lie within those sacred texts, not least the genocidal conflicts of David's time. He also understates one central problem of Christianity: the claim that its universally relevant truth is the property of an exclusive group, the Saved.

Give those keys to the ruler of any worldly kingdom, and justified mayhem is inevitable. But it is remarkable that such purely religious strife arose mainly in the first half of the second Christian Millennium. Here Martin is surely right - but he does let the Crusaders off lightly. Although it is true that they were mainly Gothic thugs from Northern Europe, they were clearly cheered on by Bernard of Clairvaux and Catherine of Siena. He is, however, right to exclude the 150 years of allegedly religious wars in Europe (from 1500); this

was essentially a Catholic civil war between Spain and France, driven by national rather than religious identity. Martin explores the growing diversity of relations between church and society in the following centuries. That Catholic family quarrel war left Christendom in ruins and a new Protestant ascendancy in Britain and North America. These societies retained a shameless capacity for self-justifying violence, in the British Empire and on the American Frontier. But their churches began to peel apart from the body politic, and helped to make that body less tyrannical. They begin to govern by consent rather than by assertion of divine right. Communities are given the freedom to choose, and tend to choose peace. The pattern spreads more widely: liberal democracies do not make war upon one another, and induce others to do so only at the risk of angry protest. There is a Christian root to this, and a Christian future, as suggested in the growth of peaceable Pentecostalism worldwide.

Elsewhere, having given up childish things, Europe got on with some really grown-up wars. Napoleon. Stalin and Hitler are children of the Dawkinsian Enlightenment, though they may have been born on the wrong side of that blanket. It seems reasonable to argue that Christianity does not cause war in itself,

and that its restraints have, for most of its history, avoided the horrific conflicts that mar the post-Christian period. Martin regrets the inability of the churches to develop some practical wisdom from their revealed truths. He is especially amused by the antics of the international Christian bureaucracy, whose hyper-moralism displays every virtue but that of utility. It's worse than he imagines. The World Council of Churches now proclaims that the Churches should renounce all theological and other justification of the use of military force. In their fanatic zeal they fail to see that such a new commandment is totalitarian rather than pacifist - it simply suppresses debate.

Martin insists that the Christian vocation in public life is inevitably engaged with violence, which sits uneasily with Christian commitment. He indicates the complex relations between the experience of the sacred, the social nature of religion and the logic of politics. He wants another Reinhold Niebuhr to stimulate us, but in the meantime he is not doing badly himself. The next century will be as religious and conflictual as this - but not, God willing, so terrible that a zoologist is a better guide than an expositor of religion.

"Faith and Reason" is edited by Paul Vellely.

Davies drafts old guard into new City regulator

The financial services mega-regulator, SuperSIB, came a step closer yesterday after the chairman, Howard Davies, named his key deputies. All three are currently with regulators.

Tom Stevenson, Financial Editor, reports on the creation of the new City watchdog.

The new unified City regulator began to take shape yesterday after Howard Davies named three managing directors to work under him, drawing exclusively on existing regulators to fill the posts.

He also clarified the structure of the enlarged financial services watchdog, confirming that the system of regulation by type of institution was to be ditched in favour of supervising different functions across all types of business.

Dubbed SuperSIB by the media and known as NewRO internally, the new watchdog will not be named officially until the end of the month when the new organisation will be formally launched and its new executives introduced.

By opting for a flat management structure, with no chief executive, Mr Davies found senior positions in the new organisations for the key figures in the self-regulatory organisations that will be replaced by SuperSIB.

He deliberately avoided the creation of a chief executive's position in order to maintain the loyalty of senior regulators who might otherwise have been unwilling to give up their existing fiefdoms for what they perceived to be smaller jobs.

The only surprise omission from yesterday's line-up was Securities and Investments Board chief executive Andrew Winckler, who leaves SIB at the end of the year. Like Colette Bowe, head of the Personal Investment Authority, Mr Winckler decided against swapping the top job at an existing regulator for a second-tier role in the enlarged watchdog.

The three managing directors named yesterday are:

Richard Farrant, head of the Securities and Futures Authority, who will chair SuperSIB's management committee and be

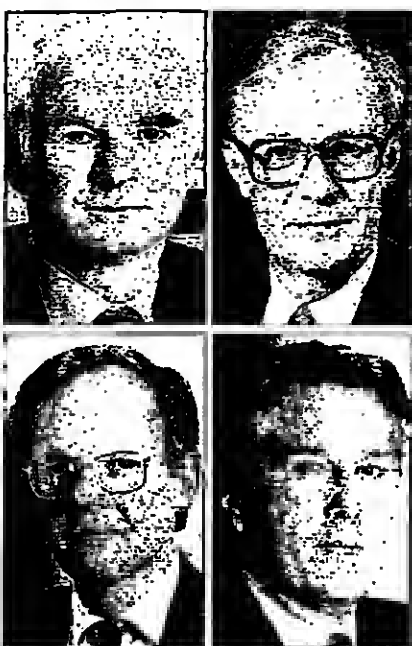
directly responsible, as chief operating officer, for the regulator's internal operations, including human resources and finance.

Michael Foot, the Bank of England executive director responsible for banking supervision, who will head up a new financial supervision function encompassing all types of institutions.

Phillip Thorpe, who has headed the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation (Imro), will lead an authorisation and enforcement division and take on responsibility for consumer relations.

Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Eddie George, the Governor of the Bank of England, said yesterday they planned to make the appointments to the SIB board before Royal Assent was given to the Bank of England Bill, which stripped from the Bank its supervisory role.

Once that bill is passed, expected to be in the spring of next year, the SIB board will become responsible for all regulation. The existing self-regulatory organisations will, however, not be officially rolled into SuperSIB until a new financial services act is passed, which might not be until 2000.



Top team: (clockwise from top left) Howard Davies has appointed Richard Farrant, Phillip Thorpe and Michael Foot to main roles at NewRO

Mr Davies said yesterday that two-year transition period presented risks, but he said it was a better alternative to leaving the SROs independent. Wrapping the front-line regulators in informally would reduce the risk of staff leaving or firms dragging their feet on enforcement issues because they felt they were dealing with a lame duck regulator.

The appointments were being seen yesterday as a neat solution to a potentially difficult combination of high-profile appointments. Observers said Mr Farrant was being rewarded for running arguably the best-managed SRO, while Mr Thorpe's appointment was viewed as an appropriate prize for his deft handling of the Peter Young scandal at Morgan Grenfell in which he ensured that thousands of investors were promptly compensated.

It is thought that success, together with a series of stiff fines for regulatory transgressions, gave the 43-year-old former barrister from New Zealand the edge over Ms Bowe, whose PIA has struggled to enforce adequate redress for the pensions mis-selling scandal.

As well as running the SFA, Mr Farrant, 52, has experience of banking supervision at the Bank of England and as an adviser to the Hong Kong Banking Commissioner where he handled a succession of crises at local banks.

Mr Foot, 50, has been at the Bank of England since 1969 when he joined as an economist. His career has included a spell as head of the Bank's foreign exchange division and as the UK's representative at the IMF in Washington.

Other appointments announced yesterday included Oliver Page, a deputy director at the Bank of England, as a director of financial supervision. Martin Roberts moves from the DTI to become director of insurance and friendly society supervision.

Mr Davies said yesterday: "I now have my top team in place. All three bring particular strengths. But the key will be for us to work together as a team. We are fully committed to doing so."

The creation of the new vertical structure replaces the old system in which one office oversaw all aspects of regulation for a particular type of financial business. Mr Davies said the new system had been arrived at after an internal study backed up by outside consultants from McKinsey.



John Leach, chief executive of Brent Walker (left), with the Close Brothers Corporate Finance executive, John Llewellyn-Lloyd, who handled the sale of William Hill

End of the road for Brent Walker

Brent Walker looks certain to be liquidated following the sale of William Hill.

Its last remaining substantial subsidiary, for £700m to Nomura. The disposal marks the end of the leisure empire built up by former boxer George Walker which at one time owned marinas, more than 1,000 pubs and the bookmakers, which were sold yesterday.

Completion of the sale will leave Brent Walker with less than £5m of assets offset by more than £500m of debts owed to a consortium of banks, most of which have written off the bad loans. There will

be no return for shareholders and its shares will be delisted at the end of the month.

Nomura's acquisition of William Hill's 1,500 betting offices makes it the second-largest bookmaker in Britain after Ladbrokes. It is understood to have outbid rival Bass, which owns the smaller Coral chain, as well as a venture capital-backed management buyout. The Japanese takeover is likely to signal the end for the incumbent management.

Guy Hands, head of Nomura's principal finance group, said: "William Hill has a great future. We will create a new

independent force in British betting which will stimulate greater competition in the industry."

Nomura has made a series of large acquisitions in Britain recently, including 5,400 pubs to make it the country's largest pub landlord, a train leasing company and a portfolio of Ministry of Defence housing. Its strategy in each case has been to use the strong cash flow from the assets to back bond issues ahead of a planned flotation of the business after between three and five years.

— Tom Stevenson

US price levels give markets another fright

For the third day running, the financial markets got a bit of a fright. This time, reports Diane Coyle, Economics Editor, it was due to news of an alarming increase in the prices charged by US manufacturers.

Wall Street's knee-jerk reaction to the latest economic statistics was to mark share and bond prices sharply lower. Although they later recovered a little, there was little comfort for those who fear the long-awaited stock market "correction" is under way.

The Dow Jones index fell nearly 60 points almost as soon as it opened, but was only 25 points down at 8,036.37 by late morning. Treasury bonds shed more than a point. In London the FTSE 100 index ended 9.5 points higher at 5,227.3 after falling as much as 31 points during the day.

The 0.5 per cent rise in US producer prices last month was more than twice as much as analysts had expected. Prices have stopped falling at an annual rate and now look to be heading firmly upwards.

This appeared to put flesh on the bones of fears expressed on Wednesday by Alan Greenspan, the Federal Reserve chairman, when he warned of the danger of higher inflation due to the tight labour market and strong demand.

Higher energy prices helped explain the price surge, the second monthly increase after seven months of decline. But the "core" index, excluding energy and food, jumped by 0.4 per cent anyway after a 0.1 per cent rise in August. Petrol

prices were up 2.2 per cent in September following a 5.9 per cent surge in August.

There were other special factors helping explain the increase in core prices. Tobacco prices jumped 3.2 per cent because manufacturers raised the price of a pack of cigarettes by seven cents at the start of September as the industry prepared for the expected costs of settling lawsuits.

In addition, new car prices increased by 1.4 per cent, their strongest gain since October 1991.

Some economists drew comfort from these one-off effects. David Resler, chief economist at Nomura Securities in New York, said: "There is no discernible change in the underlying tame inflation picture." But others said yesterday's figures suggested inflation was indeed on an upward trend. "It is likely to affect the market's perception of the possibility of a rate hike," said Christopher Low of HSBC Markets.

This week's succession of bad news has clearly left the world's stock and bond markets on edge. Mr Greenspan's testimony, sowing seeds of doubt about the US economy's prospects for inflation-free growth, was followed on Thursday by an unexpected increase in German and French interest rates. This was seen as a step towards getting European interest rates in line ahead of the start date for the single currency.

A senior Bank of England official said yesterday that preparations in the City of London for the start of the single currency were well under way. Ian Plenderleith, executive director at the Bank, said: "The London markets will need to be able to operate in the euro from the outset across the full range of their wholesale activities and practical preparations are now well advanced to achieve that by January 1999."

Sheaffer battle heads for US court

The battle for Sheaffer, the loss-making American pens business, could come to a US court next week as a UK venture capital company fights it out with Bic, the French giant best known for Bicos and disposable razors. Nigel Cope, City Correspondent, reports on a messy affair.

Alchimy, the venture capital company run by Jon Moulton, is hoping to secure an early court hearing in New York to decide who will win control of Sheaffer, one of the world's best-known pen makers.

A hearing is not scheduled until January but Alchimy says Sheaffer's finances are so pre-

carious that a delay would prove damaging to the business. It is keen to decide the matter so improvements can be made in time for the all-important Christmas selling season. It is pushing for a hearing in the Appellate Court in New York as soon as possible.

The court's decision should end a bruising battle between Alchimy and Bic, both of whom feel they have the right to buy Sheaffer. Both are offering around \$30m for the business.

Sheaffer certainly needs fresh backing. Though a well-known name it has been loss-making for years and last year lost "several million dollars" on sales of around £35m. It has suffered from lack of product innovation and fierce competition from rivals, particularly Gillette, the razor company which owns the Parker, Watermans and Papermate brands.

The bid battle dates back to last year and focuses on a right of refusal which the Sheaffer management have to buy the company.

Bic made an approach to Genitor, the current owners of Sheaffer, last year. Genitor is a Geneva-based, Luxembourg quoted company with Middle Eastern backing, which paid \$135m for Sheaffer 10 years ago.

The talks later broke down and the Sheaffer management, led by ex-Parker Pen executives Owen Jones and Shane Dolan, approached Alchimy for funding for a management buy-out. Alchimy then approached Genitor who re-ignited talks with Bic to generate competition. Bic later signed an agreement, for around \$30m, with the acknowledgement that management had a right of refusal.

Though Alchimy later said it would exercise that right

and match the Bic offer, Bic went to court to block it, saying it was Alchimy that had taken up the right of refusal, not the management.

Martin Bolland of Alchimy expressed confidence yesterday that a hearing would go in its favour. "The first hearing went overwhelmingly in our favour, then they appealed," he said. If Alchimy's management buy-out team wins the legal fight, it says it will revitalise Sheaffer by investing in new product development.

It would be pleasing deal for Jon Moulton, who backed the buy-out of Parker Pen from Manpower when he was at Schroder Ventures.

Parker Pen's middle management team then included Mr Jones and Mr Dolan, who are now respectively the chief executive and chief financial officer of Sheaffer.

MCI to consider bid from WorldCom

The board of MCI, British Telecom's US partner, last night agreed to further evaluate the \$30bn bid launched by the rival US telecoms group WorldCom.

This is the first time MCI has met formally to consider the bid since WorldCom stunned Wall Street and BT 10 days ago with its unsolicited offer which topped BT's agreed \$23bn bid.

However, MCI has not set a deadline for when it will decide which bid to recommend to shareholders. The WorldCom offer, which is entirely in the form of paper, values MCI at \$41.5 a share. BT's cash and shares offer values MCI at around \$34 a share.

MCI has appointed Lehman Brothers in New York to advise it on the WorldCom offer. It was already being advised on the BT deal by investment bankers from Lazard Freres.

"They [MCI's directors] now

have a second adviser, and they will say they would like to be more informed," said Steven Copher, research director at Kellner DiLeo, a New York arbitrage firm. "MCI is not in a position to turn these guys away. They accepted a 25 per cent reduction in consideration on behalf of their shareholders and here comes someone to make their shareholders whole."

Meanwhile BT and MCI announced they had completed a strategic link-up with Portugal Telecom. BT and MCI have paid £74m for a 1.5 per cent stake in Portugal Telecom. Telefonica, will take a 3.5 per cent shareholding.

Sir Iain Vallance, BT's chairman, said the shareholding underpinned the three-way alliance that it announced along with MCI and Portugal Telecom in April.

— Michael Harrison

Azlan launches £24m rescue issue

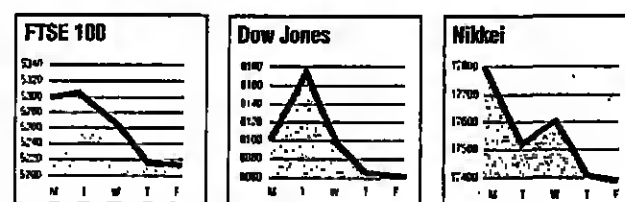
Azlan, the computer distributor, is preparing to re-list its shares after warning that it will go into receivership unless investors approve a £24m rescue rights issue. The company, whose shares were suspended at 555p in June pending an investigation in accounting irregularities, is proposing a two-for-one rights issue at 37p to pull it back from the brink. Barrie Morgans, who took over as chief executive in July, outlined an astonishing catalogue of failures by the old management but said the problems had now been "cleared out".

The investigation pointed to "serious failures of management and internal financial controls... acts of concealment and improper behaviour... strains arising from the rapid growth of the business" and "disregard of generally accepted accounting principles". The failures led to the resignation of Azlan's chairman, chief executive and finance director. Nine other employees face disciplinary action and six have been warned. Adjustments following the investigation meant the company reported losses in the year to April of £14.1m compared to estimates made less than six months ago of £14.8m profits.

Mr Morgans called the events "really fundamental house-keeping errors". He said the company had grown too quickly. "The expansion would have stretched a much bigger company. When the internal financial controls fail, they go very quickly. All this happened in just six months."

He said he was surprised by the depth of the problems. However he said the problems were limited to the UK business, just one-third of the total, and Akam, the training business bought recently, was performing very strongly.

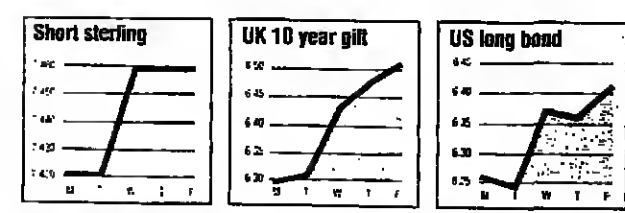
STOCK MARKETS



*Dow Jones index and graph at 5pm

Index	Close	Change	Change(%)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	5227.30	9.50	0.18	5330.80	3900.40	3.34
FTSE 250	4874.30	9.70	0.20	4883.90	4348.10	3.30
FTSE 350	2514.10	4.70	0.19	2555.30	1949.20	3.32
FTSE All Share	2455.93	4.44	0.18	2492.41	1925.79	3.30
FTSE SmallCap	2378.7	2.60	0.11	2380.20	2128.40	3.07
FTSE FTSE100	1307.6	0.90	0.07	1348.50	1198.70	3.21
FTSE AIM	1007.7	3.40	0.34	1138.00	1003.80	0.96
Dow Jones	8036.37	-22.35	-0.28	8259.31	5921.87	1.56
Nikkei	17376.92	-242.26	-1.38	21612.30	17303.65	0.83
Hong Kong	14273.12	-565.40	-3.81	16673.27	12055.17	2.81
Dax	4188.52	-54.49	-1.28	4438.93	2658.25	1.90

INTEREST RATES



Index	3 month	1 yr	10 year	1 yr	10 year	1 yr	10 year
UK	7.36	1.39	7.63	1.34	6.51	-0.95	6.48
US	5.75	0.22	5.98	0.14	6.15	-0.47	6.43
Japan	0.53	0.04	0.58	-0.05	2.00	-0.80	2.63
Germany	3.61	0.50	4.10	0.88	5.62	-0.39	6.15

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Falls
Redland 257.50 17.50 7.29	Race Electronic 228.50 -25.00 -9.86
Assoc. of Ports 301.00 14.00 4.88	Serve Gp 1320.00 -4.00 -0.30
Bioconcepts 515.00 22.50 4.57	Allego Colloids 113.50 -4.00 -3.40
Caradon 198.00 7.50 3.94	Belt Biotech 120 -4 -3.23

CURRENCIES

Index	Close	Change	Yr Ago	Index	Close	Change	Yr Ago
FTSE 100	5227.30	-0.18	1.5665	Dollar	1.6211	-0.45c	1.5665
Dow Jones	8036.37	-0.03p	2.3941	Sterling	0.6169	+0.17p	0.6391
Nikkei	17376.92	-0.00p	1.7507	D-Mark	2.8383	-0.03p	2.3941
Yen	194.31	-0.24	174.15	Yen	119.88	+0.80p	1.5284
£ index	100.10	-0.10	87.20	S Index	104.50	0.00	97.30

OTHER INDICATORS

Index	Close	Change	Yr Ago	Index	Close	Change	Yr Ago
Brent Oil (\$)	20.89	-0.05	28.19	Gold (\$)	329.05	1.30	382.30
Gold (\$)	329.05	1.30	382.30	RPI	159.30	3.6	193.76
Silver (\$)	5.14	-0.10	4.97	Base Rates	7.00	5.75	07.00

www.bloomberg.com

source: Bloomberg



JEREMY WARNER ON WHY GRANADA HAS RULED OUT A DEMERGER

Robinson's Granada decides against demerger

Every year about this time, Granada holds a get-together of senior executives and advisers to thrash out corporate strategy for the year ahead. The coming session will in many respects be an occasion for self-congratulation, for the whole group seems to be firing on all cylinders right now and the potential for improvement at Forte, acquired after an acrimonious takeover battle last year, is exceeding everyone's wildest expectations.

Nothing is ever perfect in business, however, and after a spectacular run, the share price has been underperforming these past six months. In part this is because the pace of hotel disposals has been much slower than was promised at the time of the Forte takeover. Some hotels that were earmarked for sale, might now be kept.

But it is also to do with a lingering concern over where Granada is heading. No body can quarrel with performance, which since Gerry Robinson moved into the hot seat in the early 1990s, has been spectacular. Rather it is to do with the shape of the company. Granada is essentially a conglomerate of three parts - its hotel, catering and motorway service station interests, its TV rental interests, and its glamour TV and media companies.

Conglomerates are unfashionable these days and if the City has been prepared to turn a blind eye to the conglomerated nature of Granada thus far, nothing is for ever.

Focus and consolidate; these are the two great corporate mantras of the age. If they were followed at Granada, the group would be breaking itself up into at least two and possibly three parts.

So could the October strategy meeting bring news of a demerger? The bankers and lawyers who make money out of these things will be disappointed to learn this, but there is virtually no possibility of it. Executives have studied the arguments and pressures for it, and concluded that no benefit would be derived from going down that route. The decision has yet to be taken formally, but effectively it has already been ruled out for the foreseeable future. Should shareholders be concerned about this disregard for fashion, or can Mr Robinson justify his oddball combination of businesses?

The Granada chairman is so much admired and well liked in the City that nobody is seriously going to challenge his decision. Even so, some fund managers will feel uncomfortable with the situation. Few believe any longer in the old Han-

son philosophy, that it is possible to apply with success a common set of management skills across a range of diverse businesses. To the extent that this worked in the past, it was achieved by imposing rigid controls and targets across the group, pretty much regardless of the needs and long term health of its individual parts.

In today's more competitive and globalised markets, this is generally considered a crude and wholly inappropriate approach. Maintaining competitiveness in today's environment requires managers to be highly sensitive to the long term needs of their businesses, and to have a perfect understanding of the markets in which they operate. Plainly a group that is run across a range of industries according to a book of numbers cannot hope to achieve that.

Fund managers have also begun to demand more clarity from companies than can ever be achieved in a conglomerate, where it is often possible to hide the poor performance of one part of the group behind the buoyant performance of another. If there are decisions to be made about which sectors to invest in, it should be the fund manager who is making them, not the corporate executive, who by and

large should be sticking to his knitting. That's the general view, in any case.

All of which rather begs the question of why the City was prepared to back Granada in its bid for Forte when only a couple of years previously the target had been LWT. Beyond a TV in every hotel bedroom, the two businesses could hardly be more unrelated. As it has lost faith, then, with the old conglomerates of the 1980s - Hanson, BTR, BAT Industries - the City seems only too happy to support the creation of another.

To some extent, this is explained by the old adage of what goes round comes round. By the time they began the process of breaking themselves up, both Hanson and BTR were past their sell by date, mature businesses in mature industries, some of them so unrelentingly run for cash over the previous decade that they were all but dead and buried.

Granada, by contrast, is in two of Britain's fastest growing industries, media and leisure, and so far it has not been possible to fault the way it has run either. Forte is turning into a veritable gold mine, while the group's successful bid for digital terrestrial and its continued interest in BSkyB is transforming its media in-

terests into some of the most valuable in the country.

On the "if it ain't broke, why mend it" philosophy alone, then, there is little case for demerging Granada. There is also plainly a considerable benefit to Granada in size for the sake of it. Without LWT, it would not have been large enough to do Forte. Without the critical mass Granada now possesses in both these industries, a whole range of higher risk investment and business opportunities would be closed off. Furthermore, it is not at all clear that demerger of itself does create shareholder value. The performance of Thorn EMI has been little short of disastrous since TV rental was separated from music.

Consistency never was the investment community's strong point. Even as the old style conglomerate has lost its allure, there are certain other types of conglomerate, notably media conglomerates like Lord Holford's United News and Media, which have become highly fashionable. A conglomerate like Granada would seem to be right on the cusp of the City's tolerance level, but while it continues to pile on value both in media and leisure at the present rate of knots, nobody is in a position to complain.

Lenders offer unprecedented fixed-rate mortgage deals

Banks and building societies this week launched a host of cheap fixed-rate mortgage deals that could save house buyers thousands of pounds. Andrew Verity examines how lenders are taking advantage of the dramatic fall in long-term interest rates.

Woolwich yesterday cut the interest rate it offers on borrowers for fixed mortgages over five years from 6.99 per cent to 6.79 per cent. Nationwide also announced it had cut its five-year fixed rates by half a percentage point to 6.99 per cent.

How mortgage costs are falling

Interest charged on fixed rate for five years

Provider	New rate	Old rate	Change %
Woolwich	6.79	6.99	0.2
Nationwide	6.99	7.59	0.6
Northern Rock	6.45	6.89	0.44
Abbey National	6.49	6.99	0.5
First Mortgage	6.69	6.79	0.1

The cuts follow a dramatic drop in long-term interest rates, enabling mortgage providers to borrow cheaply and pass on the savings to customers.

Earlier in the week, Abbey National launched an offer of 6.49 per cent, fixed for five years, and cut mortgage arrangement fees to £250 from £395. Northern Rock responded a day later by cutting its rates to 6.45 per cent. Until a week ago, very few providers offered rates of less than 7.25 per cent on five-year fixed-rate mortgages.

Industry observers believe the latest cuts create an unprecedented situation for new borrowers where fixed-rate mortgages are significantly cheaper than those with variable rates.

Most variable mortgage

rates now hover between 8.25 and 8.45 per cent. But borrowers can now fix their payments at a rate almost two percentage points below this. With the next move in interest rates expected to be up, the gap is likely to grow further in the short term.

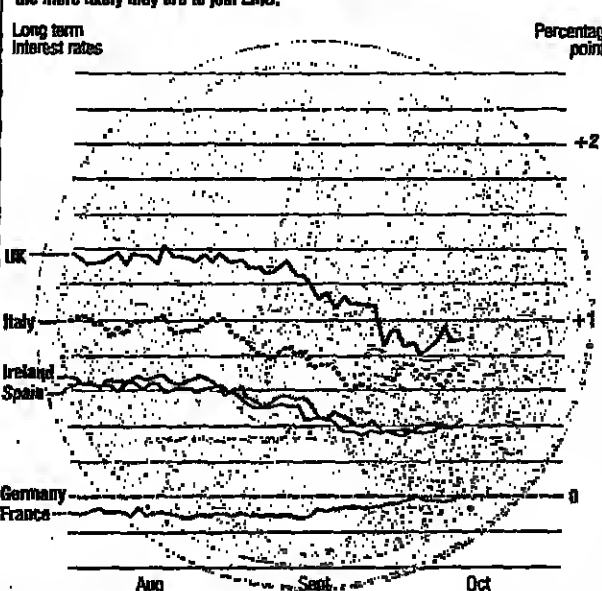
Mark Chilton, a mortgage expert at international property consultants Savills, said: "There is now a stunning differential between fixed and variable rates which may be unprecedented. Every man, woman and child in the country should be looking at this."

Mortgage brokers believe the deals on offer may be so cheap that existing borrowers as well as new borrowers may benefit from taking them up. Past experience in other countries, such as the US, indicates that borrowers benefit from switching if fixed rates are more than 1.25 points below variable rates.

The rates may only be on offer for a short time. Mortgage providers set in motion the cheaper deals at the beginning of the week when they could borrow long-term money at a rate of just 6.6 per cent. Long-term interest rates have since risen to more than 6.9 per cent.

Who will be in EMU? The financial markets' view

The closer other countries get to the dashed baseline (Germany) the more likely they are to join EMU.



TOWARDS EMU: If the line moves towards the German base line it means investors no longer require such a high premium for holding that country's bonds compared to German ones, because they are confident the country won't default against the mark. In other words, they think that country will be locked into a single currency with Germany in 10 years' time.

AWAY FROM EMU: However, if they think the country won't be in EMU, that it will have higher inflation, and that there is a risk of a future devaluation against the mark, then they will demand an extra premium for holding that country's bonds, so the line will move away from the base.

When will EMU start? The City Analysts' View

The independent asked analysts from: Nikko Europe, Paine Webber, ABN Amro, JP Morgan, Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, Salomon Brothers, Goldman Sachs, HSBC, James Capel, UBS what probability they placed on EMU starting on time.

Probability EMU starts on time:	79%	(79% last week)
Probability EMU is delayed:	15%	(16% last week)
Probability EMU never happens:	6%	(5% last week)

Rate rise boosts chances

The chances of EMU going ahead on time have on balance improved in the past week, according to our panel of experts, although the reaction was not unanimous.

The majority view expressed by Julian Jessop at Nikko Europe is that the chances of EMU going ahead on time have increased because the synchronised rise in European interest rates on Thursday confirms the increased political momentum towards a single currency taking effect on schedule. Rate rises also improve the chances of the leading players getting budget deficits below 3 per cent on time.

Stephen King at James Capel takes a similar view. But Robert Lind at ABN Amro is concerned about the impact of the fall of Mr Prodi's government on the grounds that Italy is less likely to go ahead.

However, the collapse of the Italian government could increase the chance of a technocratic government being formed which could implement the budget changes which political parties could find impossible to justify to their supporters.

— Clifford German

IN BRIEF

Tobacco companies settle in first passive smoking case

Tobacco companies have settled the first passive smoking case to be tried in court, it was announced yesterday. The tobacco companies, which were being sued by 60,000 US based flight attendants for \$5bn, agreed to pay legal costs, totalling \$47m, and to establish a \$300m fund to study the effects of passive smoking. The flight attendants claimed that passive smoking on aeroplanes had caused ailments such as heart disease and lung cancer. Yesterday's settlement does not mean the end of the road for the tobacco companies. The class action may be over, but passive smokers are still free to pursue individual claims in court.

TV industry further in red

Imported television programmes such as *Friends* and *Oprah* took Britain's film and television industry further into the red on the balance of payments last year. The total shortfall of £191m between £948m in receipts and just over £1.1bn in payments made overseas compared with a deficit of £160m in 1995. British film successes overseas, such as *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, brought in higher earnings from the North American market. The film industry enjoyed a balance of payments surplus of £91m, compared with a deficit of £10m in 1995.

Front-runner for Grosvenor

The Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, has emerged as a front runner to buy the Grosvenor House Hotel from Granada. Though a deal is not expected for several weeks it is understood that Granada is negotiating with the Sheikh and one of two corporate bidders over a deal. The hotel, on London's Park Lane, has a book value of £302m though Granada is hoping to secure up to £375m.

Nottingham Forest slides

Shares in Nottingham Forest, the first division football club, fell from their placing price of 70p to 61p on their first day of dealings on the Alternative Investment Market. The float raised £2.6m for the club instead of the £3.5m originally hoped for.

Ed Wallis

In yesterday's paper we carried a story headlined "PowerGen succession battle begins as Wallis set to depart". The headline was incorrect. As the text made clear, Mr Wallis has no intention of giving up his position as executive chairman of PowerGen at present and we apologise to him for having suggested otherwise.

Golf operator reports fall

PGA European Tour Course, the golf course operator hit by a profits warning in July, reported a sharp fall in first-half profits to £46,000 compared to £1.7m the previous year.

Free access to Tradepoint system Jardine buys Appleyard for £53m

The future of Tradepoint, the electronic rival to the London Stock Exchange, looks significantly more assured after Royalblue, the UK's leading trading software provider, said yesterday it would offer free access to Tradepoint's order-driven trading system along with the London Stock Exchange's system.

The agreement means traders will be able to access both the Tradepoint and London exchanges from the same dealing screen for no extra charge. It should enable Tradepoint to compete more effectively when the London ex-

change switches from its traditional market-making system to the electronic order-driven format on 20 October. Shares in struggling AIM-listed Tradepoint, which was rescued from the brink of administration in July by an emergency cash injection from venture capitalists, jumped 12.4 per cent to 136.5p yesterday.

John Hamer, chief executive of Royalblue, said growing customer demand for Tradepoint had prompted it to develop an interface linking Tradepoint into its widely used software package, Fidessa. "This gives Trade-

point more shelf space and encourages competition, and should mean extra volume for us," said Mr Hamer.

Royalblue will take a fee from Tradepoint on each transaction. Although Tradepoint offers advantages over the London order-driven system, principally that it is anonymous and potentially cheaper, at present traders have to use a separate workstation to access Tradepoint.

The deal with Royalblue should make access easier and give Tradepoint wider exposure.

— Sameem Ahmad

Jardine International Motors yesterday seized control of Appleyard, the ailing West Yorkshire motor dealers, with a £53m bid. Appleyard's chairman and chief executive, Mike Williamson, has agreed to accept the deal.

The two businesses are roughly equal in size and the deal will create the biggest single motor dealership in the UK with annual sales of £1.3bn.

Jardine is paying 80p a share, a premium of 21 per cent on the market price of Appleyard shares on Thursday night, but well below the peak of 92p when Appleyard first emerged as

a bid target earlier this summer. The two businesses were a good fit geographically and Appleyard's VW and Audi dealerships would fit well with Jardine's strength in Ford, Jardine's chief executive, Peter Ward, a former chief executive of Rolls-Royce, said yesterday.

Mr Ward said that Jardine would surrender Appleyard's Scania lorry franchise in return for a payment of £7.5m and there would be some adjustments in its list of dealerships, but Jardine would keep the Minorities Vauxhall business and the contract hire business.

— Clifford German

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Starting	1 month	3 month
UK	100.00	2.066	2.528
Australia	1.877	18.948	18.948
Belgium	19.559	59.432	59.432
Canada	2.237	2.230	2.230
Denmark	0.163	0.178	0.178
ECU	1.446	1.446	1.446
France	6.551	6.482	6.482
Germany	2.331	2.331	2.331
Greece	4.433	4.433	4.433
Hong Kong	12.540	12.540	12.540
India	13.62	13.62	13.62
Italy	1.364	1.364	1.364
Japan	14.82	14.82	14.82
Malaysia	5.042	5.042	5.042
Mexico	12.54	12.54	12.54
Netherlands	3.366	3.366	3.366
New Zealand	2.537	2.537	2.537
Norway	7.474	7.474	7.474
Portugal	20.48	20.48	20.48
Saudi Arabia	6.074	6.074	6.074
Singapore	2.453	2.453	2.453
South Africa	7.265	7.265	7.265
Spain	16.63	16.63	16.63
Sweden	2.453	2.453	2.453
Switzerland	2.235	2.235	2.235
US	1.624	1.624	1.624

Other Spot Rates

Country	Starting	Dollar	Country	Starting	Dollar
Argentina	1.820	100.00	Oman	0.690	0.690
Brazil	1.780	10.82	Philippines	53.78	53.78
Chile	1.342	8.255	Russia	5.434	5.434
Czech Rep	3.322	22.825	Saudi Arabia	6.074	6.074
Egypt	5.509	3.361	Singapore	2.453	2.453
Ghana	3.968	2.200	South Africa	7.265	7.265
Hungary	5.124	36.240	Taiwan	46.32	46.32
Indonesia	2.582	34.425	Thailand	37.70	37.70
Israel	0.4825	0.3039	Turkey	1.455	1.455
Japan	1.624	1.624	USA	1.624	1.624

Interest Rates

Country	Rate	1 month	3 month	6 month	1 year
UK	7.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Germany	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
France	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
Italy	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
Spain	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
Sweden	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
Switzerland	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
US	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%

Money Market Rates

Overnight	1 week	1 month	3 month	6 month	1 year
LIBOR	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%
Domestic Depos	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%
Overseas Depos	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%
Swap Rates	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%

Liffe Financial Futures

Contract	Settlement	High	Low	Est floor volume	Open interest
Long Gold	Dec-97	163.5	163.5	27,087	34,916
US Long Bond	Dec-97	157.7	157.7	1,000	1,000
Italian Bond	Dec-97	109.0	109.0	1,000	1,000
Japan Govt Bd	Dec-97	108.0	108.0	1,000	1,000
3 Mth Sterling	Dec-97	92.4	92.4	1,000	1,000
3 Mth Eurodollar	Dec-97	92.4	92.4	1,000	1,000
3 Mth Euribor	Dec-97	92.4	92.4	1,000	1,000
3 Mth Euroswap	Dec-97	92.4	92.4	1,000	1,000
3 Mth ECU	Dec-97	92.4	92.4	1,000	1,000
FTSE 100	Dec-97	3,000.0	3,000.0	1,000	1,000

Life FTSE 100 Index Option

Series	Call	Put	Call	Put	Call	Put
100	11	25	22	200	130	217
200	69	28	40	27	150	228
300	24	71	22	120	150	230
400	34	71	19	120	170	234

Industrial Metals

LME (\$/tonne)	Cash	3 month	6 month	1 year	LME stocks	Chg
Aluminium	1537	1537	1544	1545	7	758,075
Aluminium HG	1442	1442	1442	1442	7	48,800
Aluminium Alloy	2050	2050	2050	2050	1	34,475
Copper	1500	1500	1500	1500	1	1,000,000
Lead	600	600	600	600	1	1,000,000
Nickel	6400	6400	6400	6400	1	1,000,000
Tin	15000	15000	15000	15000	1	1,000,000
Zinc	1300	1300	1300	1300	2	44,000

Precious Metals

pm fix/oz per oz	pm fix/oz per oz	pm fix/oz per oz	pm fix/oz per oz	pm fix/oz per oz	pm fix/oz per oz
Platinum	4300.00	4300.00	4300.00	4300.00	4300.00
Palladium	2500.00	2500.00	2500.00	2500.00	2500.00
Silver	310.00	310.00	310.00	310.00	310.00
Gold	380.00	380.00	380.00	380.00	380.00

Agricultural

Commodity	Price	Commodity	Price	Commodity	Price
Wheat	120.00	Barley	120.00	Potatoes	120.00
Maize	120.00	Soybeans	120.00	Wheat	120.00
Wheat	120.00	Wheat	120.00	Wheat	120.00

Keats had a phrase for it: mists and mellow fruitfulness

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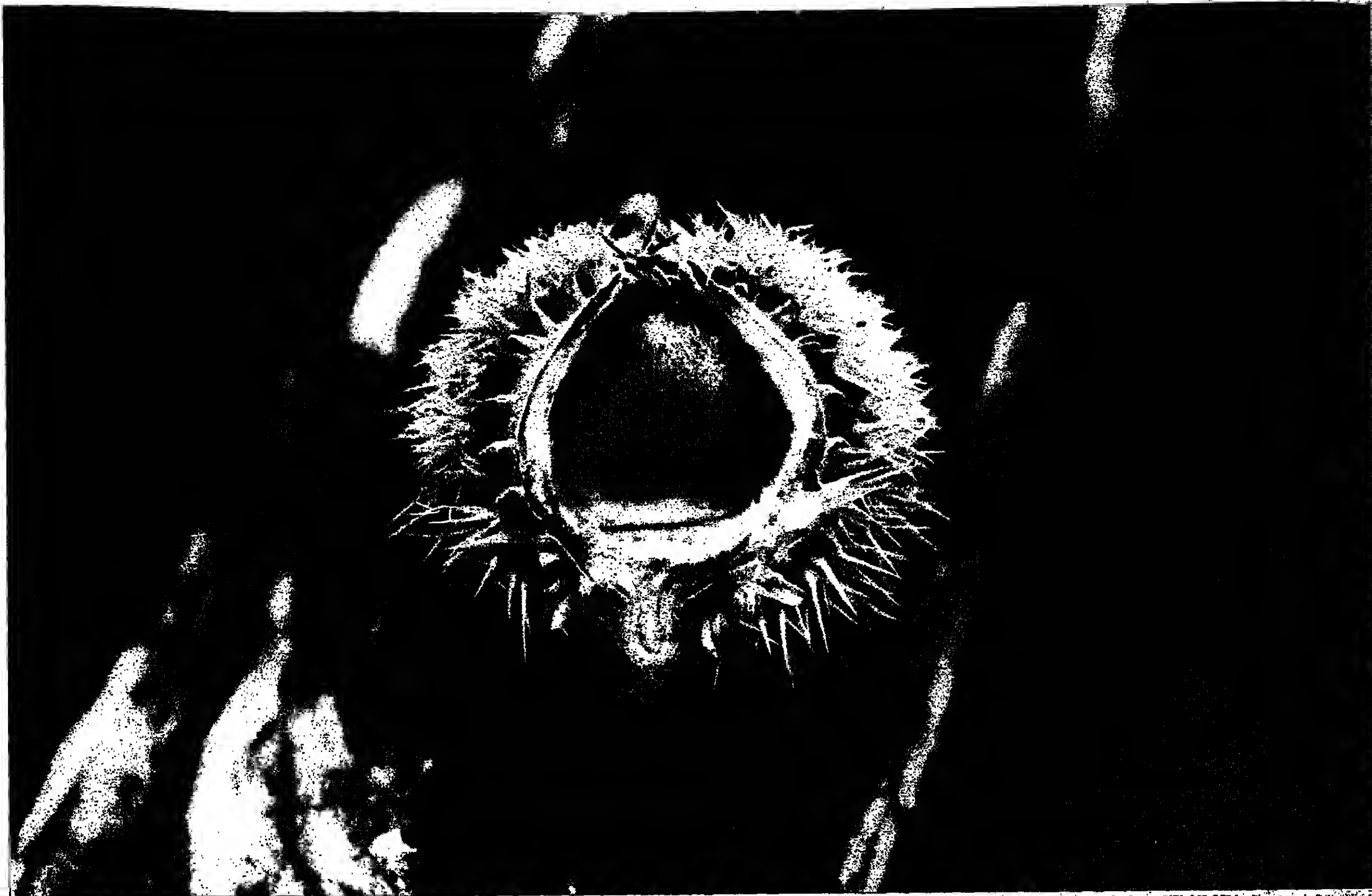
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A sweet chestnut in its spiny husk, seen in Hatfield Forest, Essex. Photograph taken with a 55mm macro lens at 1/250th of a second on f5.6, using 800asa film stock. To order a print, please telephone 0171-293 2534. Photograph: Brian Harris

TOMORROW IN THE NEW-LOOK, SEVEN-SECTION

INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY



'I had a pleasant, confessional voice when I began, and then terrible things happened to me, like 50,000 cigarettes ...' Leonard Cohen emerges from his Zen retreat to give a rare interview to Tim de Lisle

Plus

■ **Decriminalise cannabis** – the latest important developments in our campaign to change the law

■ **Getting away with it all** – why adultery is guilt-free for professional women

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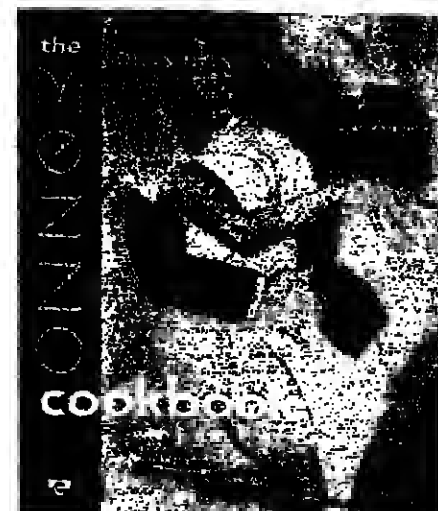
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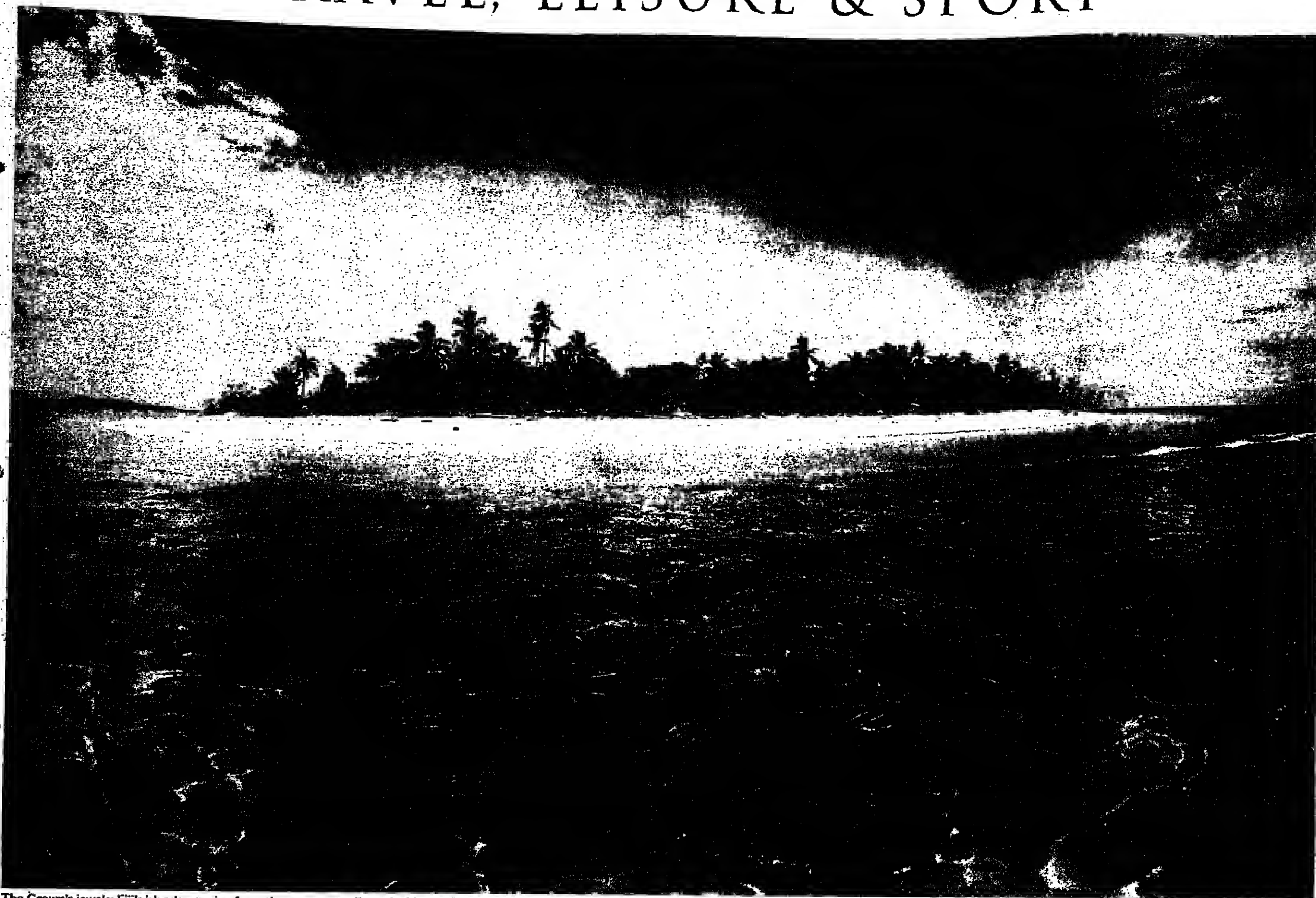
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TIME OFF

TRAVEL, LEISURE & SPORT

Saturday 11 October 1997



The Crown's jewels: Fiji's islands, ranging from tiny coconut atolls to the biggest, Viti Levu, at 100km across, this month rejoined the Commonwealth

Photograph: Robert Harding

Dream lands

The inhabitants of Fiji's 1,000 islands once ate visitors from the West; now they greet them with open smiles. Gina Cowen checks out the reality of paradise, while overleaf we take a tour of the other specks of land that dot the vast Pacific Ocean.

I had thought Fiji was just an island in the South Pacific, with the kind of distant nonchalance that sees Tahiti as little more than a Gauguin painting on the wall of some metropolitan museum. Fiji islands number, in fact, about 1,000, from tiny, coconut-palmed jewels set in the blue, to Viti Levu - big Fiji - around 100 kilometres across.

Geographically, Fiji straddles the 180th meridian (as far around the globe from Greenwich as you'll get); anthropologically, the islands mix Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia, and aeronautically, they intersect the main American-Australian flight path - providing, for me, touchdown on a round-the-world ticket.

But where, precisely to go in Fiji? There was a daunting smorgasbord of potential idylls - enhanced by cowrie necklaces, hibiscus blooms behind the ear, mile-wide smiles and "bulai", the ubiquitous, genuine call of welcome. The friendliness of Fijians is infectious.

Odd, this, from a race of warriors once famous for cannibalism. But then, as Tom Stoppard once put it, "Certainly a tribe which believes it confers honour on its elders by eating them is going to be viewed askance by another which prefers to put them in a little bungalow somewhere." Know who you prefer? From the Nadi airport I shared an old Leyland bus with some modern-day Fiji warriors - a rugby team. They dropped me at the turning to Natadola Beach Hotel. Brad, their coach, insisted it had the best beach in Fiji, and had booked me a room on his mobile.

So I walked down a dirt track to a glor-

ious sweep of white sand, empty but for a young village boy on a horse, galloping wildly bareback. A very private resort it was, too, with a shaded pool and frogs in the garden at night.

The next morning I took an early ride, cooled by a light shower of rain which cast a perfect rainbow in an arch across the bay. There were ultramarine starfish in the shallow waters, and great white cumuli massing on the flat, ocean horizon.

Then I set out to explore the capital. Suva is an appealing, old colonial city (Fiji being a British protectorate from 1874 to 1987 -



and having very recently rejoined the Commonwealth). I had been warned by a friend that "it pisses down" there. It did. I took shelter in the local market where tables were laden with tropical fruits and waka, the dried roots of the pepper plant so essential to Fijian culture in the form of kava, a mildly soporific drink that is shared at ceremonial times. It was probably drunk as an accompaniment to Reverend Thomas Baker, the missionary who ended up as a cannibal feast.

A touching display in the Fiji museum in Suva shows Baker's Bible, next to the fork used to eat him and the bowl that served him up. Also on display are the remains of his boots - with two squashed soles. He had such small feet: I wonder who ate them.

Levuka, the one-time capital, is a 12-minute flight from Suva over a luminous, aquatic palette and down on to a lick in the jungle, between volcanic peaks, on the island of Ovalau. There's a bumpy, scenic drive into town. The waterfront is lined with a string of old clapboard buildings. A tuna-canning factory, with an ecological blind eye, provides the community's main economy.

There are myriad churches, including the Sacred Heart whose bright green neon cross guides ships into the port, and whose bells ring the hour twice. Levuka had a rampant history that is now reduced to little more than a few backwater ripples of gossip. A century ago, such was its reputation that ships' captains are said to have been able to navigate into port following rum bottles floating out on the tide. Now there's the faded Ovalau Club, a Masonic lodge, a cou-

ple of restaurants and a few rather ramshackle hotels, including the Royal.

This is a masterpiece of unmodernised bedrooms (Somerset Maugham stayed in No 10), with an empty billiard room and a dining-room that is always laid up, but has the air of never really expecting to serve anyone.

The place is magical. And the longer you stay (I twice postponed my flight out), the more little paradises you discover, such as Devokula, the dream of Jeremiah Tuku Tuku, a Fijian of disarming simplicity.

He returned to his native village (an hour's drive out of Levuka) after working in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, because he had a vision - to create what is now a small settlement of beauty, abundance and peace. Devokula is a youth project that aims to preserve traditional Fijian values and understanding of the land for future generations. Set on a hillside of wild guava trees running down to a black sand beach, it is a place where time stands still. Here, Jeremiah believes, the world will come to rest.

If you want a straightforward return to Fiji, Air New Zealand charges £1,124 including tax, for travel in October. Discount agents such as Trailfinders (0171-938 3366) offer lower fares. A better plan may be to buy a return ticket to New Zealand, or a round-the-world trip: Gina Cowen's high-season circumnavigation cost £1,085, including tax, through Trailfinders. She paid £320 (£115 per night at the Natadola Beach Resort near Nadi airport (00 679 721000); at the Royal Hotel, Levuka, Ovalau (00 679 440024), she paid £315 (£9) for a single room.

INSIDE

TRAVEL

3/Jumbo city: Seattle's Boeing Museum

5/City break: Stockholm

LEISURE

12/Canyon abseiling

SPORT

Rome showdown: Glenn Moore, Ian Ridley, Guy Hodgson and Keith Elliott look forward to England's big match

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The experts said it would never fly

With the largest shed in Christendom and a debt the size of Brazil's, Boeing's staff sketched an outline on the back of an envelope; 75,000 engineering drawings later ... and the rest is the sort of history that comes to life in Seattle's Museum of Flight. Simon Calder reports.

"These men will not be hindered from accomplishing at their best speed the distance which they have to go, either by snow or rain or heat or darkness of night." When Herodotus wrote these words, around 450BC, he was referring to the Persian postal system. Nonetheless, the world's biggest plane maker has pinched the lines to set the tone for its corporate history.

You probably arrived in Seattle aboard a 747 - homeward bound to the city of its birth. If you were lucky enough to secure a window seat, you may have noticed an extra runway. Busy with executive jets and planes straight off the production line, this is the Boeing test facility. Between it and the Pacific stands a big, bright building, as clean as a new Jumbo. Return your seat to the upright position and stand by for the Museum of Flight. (That's its official name, though everyone calls it the Boeing Museum. The absence of any reference to Boeing's main competitor, Airbus, emphasises that this is a one-company venue.)

If any innovation has defined our epoch, it is surely air travel. Until three years into the 20th century, powered flight was a dream. Yet three years from the end of the millennium, flying has become both humdrum and thoroughly liberating. The average British worker needs to labour for a mere fortnight to fly clean around the world - an achievement which is technologically and socially amazing, but which has become so commonplace that airlines are reduced to competing against each other on the quality of their in-flight films and the width of their stewardesses' smiles. The company that helped bring this about is based a handy 10-minute bus ride from Seattle's international airport. With the small change from selling a few Jumbo jets, Boeing has helped to establish the Museum of Flight.

The American brothers Orville and Wilbur Wright may have pioneered powered flight, but

the route map. Instead the flight began in Marseille, hopped down to Lisbon and then across to the Azores before reaching New York.

The first commercial jet flight by a US airline, Pan Am, took place 20 years later, when a Boeing 707 flew from New York to Paris. By this time Britain's disastrous first-generation Comet had suffered a series of fatigue-related crashes. The British retired hurt from the cutting edge of aviation.

The fickle nature of air travel was demonstrated when, two decades later, that same Boeing 707 was pressed into service for British package tourists travelling with the budget airline Dan-Air. It is rumoured that Pan Am tried to buy the 707 back from Dan-Air to put it into its own museum. The British charter airline refused. Both airlines then went bust.

If you have visited the air museum in Duxford, Cambridgeshire, you will know that crawling all over the aircraft is part of the fun. At the Museum of Flight, the planes are mostly kept at wing's length. Cold War relics such as the B-52 are fenced off. As on the average flight, the intention seems to be to maintain a feel-good, no-fear ambience. So the thousands killed in air crashes hardly figure, nor do the hundreds of thousands massacred in bombing raids. There is mention of a Kamikaze plane, but this one does not indicate suicidal tendencies when applied to air travel. In 1937, the name (which translates as "Divine Wind") was applied to a Mitsubishi Ki-15, a civilian aircraft that flew from Tokyo to London in 51 hours in 1937.

The museum is not without humour. It reveals that the first 747 simulators were mounted on top of a truck to get pilots used to the extra height of these revolutionary aircraft. The most amusing relic is the Aerocar, a Fifties idea to make a plane that converts to a car (or vice versa). Wings, tail and propeller are bolted on to what looks strangely like an aeronautical Renault 5. It does fly, but commercially the concept never took off.

Besides the collection of aircraft (and imposters), the Museum of Flight has a livelier repertoire of films than any in-flight programme. Many of them are techy, Technical-or-tearjerkers from the pull-focus school of clichés; the strongest suit is devoted to the exploration of space. "The dream of flight" is a triumphalist yet witty look at the space race, and touches upon the extraordinary spirit of the Sixties, an era in which almost every scientist and engineer appears to chain-smoke.

Early footage takes you through Sputniks to Muttniks, as the early Russian space experiments using dogs were called by Nasa. The Soviet Union won the opening heats of the space race, with the launch of the first manned space flight in 1961. "I looked and looked, but I couldn't see God," Yuri Gagarin said when he returned from his day trip to space. Scientists working for Nasa were deeply alarmed. "When we land on the moon, we'll have to go through Russian customs," commented Werner von Braun. Facing headlines such as "Reds beat US into space", President Kennedy made his reckless promise to get a man on the moon by the end of the decade.

"We were heroes because we volunteered to take the place of chimpanzees," observes one astronaut wryly. "In my book that doesn't make me a hero." The fact that the Apollo XI astronauts had only seven seconds of fuel in reserve when they landed on the moon in 1969 persuades you that heroism was as important as oxygen for the space pioneers.

Shortly before Neil Armstrong took his small step came the first commercial flight of a 747. A month after the moon walk, Seattle lad Jimi Hendrix terrified the Woodstock crowd with a particularly angry version of "Purple Haze". It's not yet the company song at Boeing, the aircraft maker based in his home town, but it should be - if only for the perfect tag: "Scuse me while I kiss the sky".

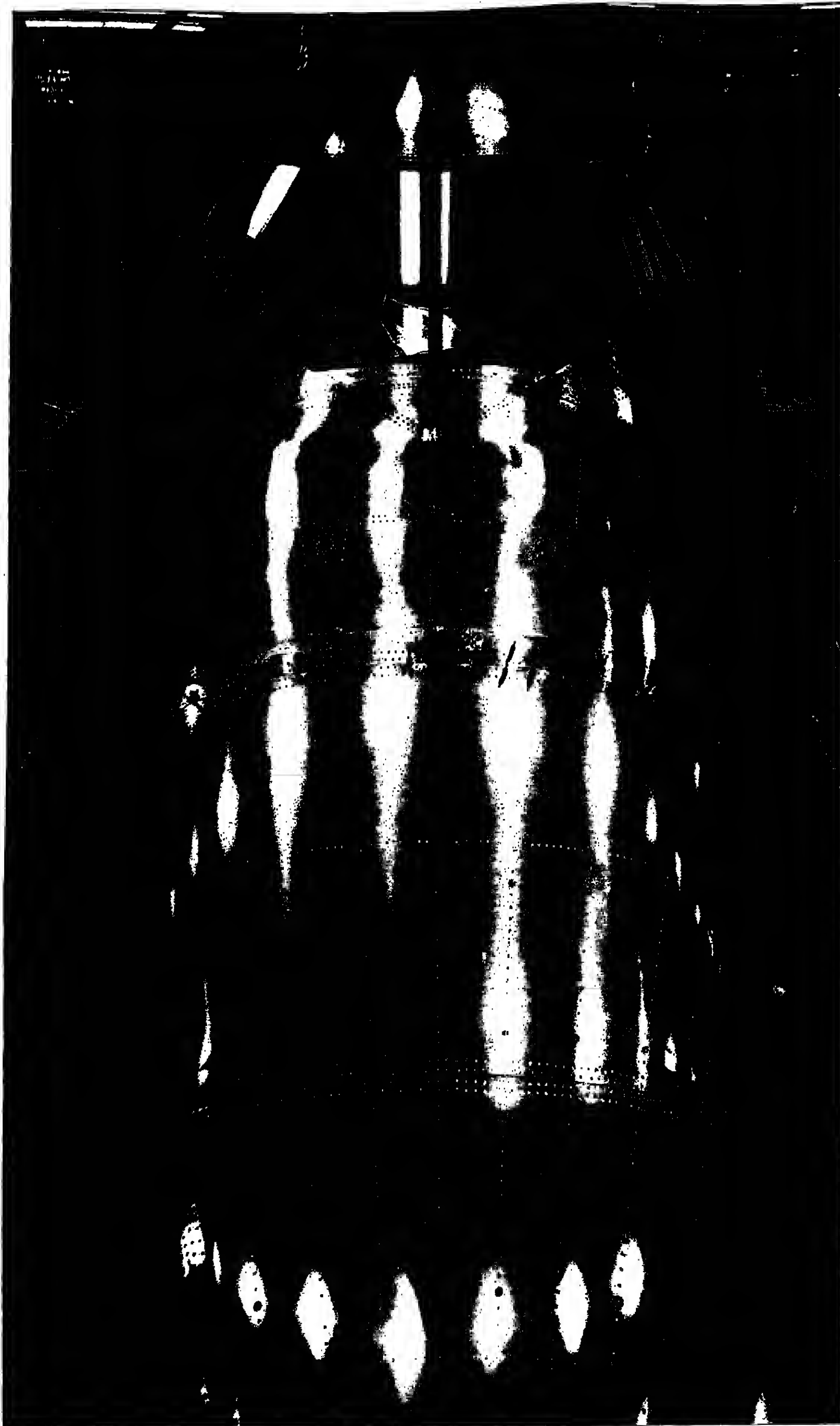
Simon Calder paid £275 for a return flight to Montreal on Air Canada, booked through Quest Worldwide (0181 546 6000) and reached Seattle on a Canadian airpass, £199 from AirPass Sales (01737 555300). The Museum of Flight (001 206 764 5720) opens daily; admission \$8 (£5), free on the first Thursday evening of the month.



after their achievement at Kitty Hawk in 1903, Europe accelerated in the race for the skies. So the first tranche of the museum's chronology is Eurocentric, and reveals secrets such as that the Dutch aircraft firm Fokker was first based in Schwerin, eastern Germany; it moved to Holland after the Second World War.

US civil aviation really took off 70 years ago this month, with the first international flight by an American airline. Pan Am took off from Key West, Florida, destination Havana. Amid the many competing aircraft manufacturers, Boeing made its name with the 247, and its first manufacturing facility was right here, in the carefully preserved Red Barn. Today, it looks barely large enough to assemble an Airfix kit.

Regular, reliable transoceanic travel began in 1939 with scheduled transatlantic flights. However, the two most obvious and glamorous destinations, London and Paris, were not on



The gamble that shrank the world: since its inaugural flight on 30 September 1969, the Jumbo has smashed its way through the record books to become the greatest utilitarian aircraft of all time. Photograph: Jose Azel/Coplorifid

'If a kid has a guitar in his hand, it means he don't have a gun in his hand'

The land south of Memphis is at the mercy of a mighty river. Matthew Broke continues his Mississippi series with a visit to the birthplace of the Delta Blues.

We sat out on Panny Mayfield's porch in the warm Southern evening. Joel, Julian, John, Miss Laura, Panny and me. On a similarly fragrant night 70 years ago Tennessee Williams sat here, too. He lived just up the street and knew the owners, and would pop over for dinner and inspiration.

This was Clarksdale, Mississippi, a small town on the Delta. When Southern folk talk about the Delta they don't mean the area south of New Orleans, where the mighty Mississippi empties into the Gulf of Mexico at the end of its

2,500-mile journey. Rather, they refer to a flat pan stretching south from Memphis, Tennessee, to the Civil War battle site at Vicksburg.

The Delta is the home of the Blues, the music that grew out of the slave chants in the cotton fields and later inspired rock 'n' roll and just about every other kind of modern music. I'd broken my Mississippi journey and jumped ship to pay homage to the devil's music.

I met Panny, a journalist, at the 20th Delta Blues Festival in Greenville. We were at the side of the stage, sweltering in 99 degrees of spongy heat, trying to photograph the veteran harmonica player Willie Foster, who writhed and twined in his wheelchair as he blew for the crowd. She insisted I go to Clarksdale the next day to see the Delta

Blues Museum, and stop by her house.

We ate beef, pasta and okra stew, drank dark beer and chatted. Miss Laura (Panny's daughter) and John (the museum's curator) rocked on the swing seat; Joel and Julian (work experience interns at the museum) lolled in their chairs. John and I discussed our beloved river. When he is not working at the museum, John runs wilderness canoe excursions for hardy tourists, sleeping and eating out on sandbars and islands.

For him, the Mississippi is a spiritual thing. "I get a feeling of closeness to God and closeness to Nature," he said. "It's always articulating new shapes and forming new meanders."

Many older Delta folk would rather forget the river's force and unpredictability. In 1927, before embankments

were built, the Mississippi flooded spectacularly. Its banks burst and the flood-water formed an inland waterway 1,000 miles long and 150 miles wide. A million people were displaced. So great was the deluge, it forced the Ohio and Yazoo to flow backwards for two days. A 12ft wave swept up the Yazoo, swamping all in its path.

"You must respect the river," Those words resounded around Mark Twain's head when he was training to become a riverboat pilot.

Across town, Evelyn Turner was opening up the Crossroads Club for a night of beer and Blues. This was an upmarket juke joint. The jukes were boozy, tumbledown shacks where up-and-coming Bluesmen would play for free. Here, as the Negro legend went, you could

sell your eternal soul to the devil in return for the ability to play faultless Blues guitar.

But in Evelyn's club the jukebox worked if you slapped it hard enough; the sky-blue walls were only partially chipped; the clientele was prestigious. Perched at the bar was Michael James - "Dr Mike" - but tonight without his band, the Interns. Next to him, in black suit and tie, was Johnnie Billington, a Bluesman on a mission. "Mr Johnnie", 61, now dedicates himself to teaching Blues guitar to young Delta kids.

We cracked open our beers and he told me his Blues survival plan. "A black child growing up on the Delta feels down-sided - crushed, you know. Eighty per cent of these kids will get in trouble before they get to 18. If a kid has a guitar in his hand it means he don't have a gun in

his hand."

The Delta is a poor, hard place to call home. The Blues are trendy for whites who can do what I was doing - cruise in, enjoy it, and take away a memory to middle-class suburbia. For the blacks, it is all they have.

Mr Johnnie knew the pressures of the Delta, and how fragile the life of a young black can be. His mission began with a few kids who would come past his house and hear him playing. Eventually he got a band together and they played a gig downtown in Clarksdale. That event grew into the Sunflower River Blues Festival, now a mainstay of the town's arts calendar, and saved those kids from an uncertain future.

The Delta is home to numerous graduates from Mr Johnnie's school of life. His current band, the Midnighters, tour often,

cramping into his ageing motor-home and trundling off all over the state. One of his proudest moments was when he was doing some music workshops at a predominantly white school in Jackson, Mississippi, and got an offer to take a young band to New York to perform.

"The school thought there was no way it was going to work," he said. "Imagine it: a black man, a Blues player, taking four little white kids to New York City for a week."

Ain't no way their parents are going to go for that. But they all did, and we went. We broke down a barrier that day.

Mr Johnnie was due on stage; I was delaying the jam session. Dr Mike, a former student of Mr Johnnie's in his garage classroom, pointed after his mentor as he walked away. "Now he is a real Bluesman. Takes bad news and makes it good. That's the Blues, right there on stage in the suit."

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48 hours in the life of ... Stockholm

Each week, 'The Independent' provides a prescription for the perfect two-day break to the soul of a city. This week, Simon Calder forsakes Waterloo for Stockholm, and couldn't escape if he wanted to.

Why go now?

Can you hear the drums? In 1997, the Swedish capital has finally become accessible at a sensible price; new, cheap flights make a weekend break affordable. But don't hang around: every day until midwinter, the Scandinavian gloom deepens, exacerbated this autumn by losing the 2004 Olympics. And from the New Year, the city becomes European Capital of Culture, so accommodation could be at a premium. Must be funny in a rich man's world.

Beam down

Until this summer, flying from Britain to Sweden for a low fare was as tricky as, say, getting from Stansted to Skavsta. Then Ryanair (0541 569569) solved both problems at once. For £99 plus tax you can fly from the Essex airport to what is euphemistically described as "Stockholm South". A connecting bus covers the 60 miles into town in about 80 minutes, for £11 return. British Airways (0345 222111), Finnair 10171-408 1222 and SAS (0345 010789) have been obliged to trim their fares from Gatwick, Heathrow and Manchester to compete; they fly to the main Arlanda airport, half-an-hour north of the city.

Get your bearings

A bus from either airport will drop you at the central bus and rail station, on the most important of Stockholm's 14 islands. You are on the western edge of the main commercial district, Norrmalm, where you will end up spending lots of your time. The other attractive landmass is just south of here: Gamla Stan (old town), an island out of time. The most comprehensively stocked tourist office in the northern hemisphere is half-a-mile east of the station; ask anyone for directions to the Sweden House.

Check in

My first visit was spent at the Bredang campsite, well south west of the city. If I had to do the same again I would, my friend, but with winter approaching (the site closes on 31 October) I recommend instead the Malardrottningen - a handsome old steamer once owned by Woolworth heiress Barbara Hutton and now converted into a "hotel" which

costs around £60 a night (book on 00 46 824 3600); or the Scandinavian-style Scandic Park (00 46 822 9620), squatting squarely on the north side of Humlegården, £90 a night including an eat-all-you-can breakfast - a critical advantage hereabouts.

Take a ride

Take tram 7 out to Djurgården, Stockholm's very own national park, (though out of summer the Tivoli funfair looks a little dismal). Take the ferry back to Gamla Stan to sense the resonances of a city which has found harmony between land and water.

Take a hike

... when you land at the old town, through the narrow lanes and elegantly discreet spaces of Gamla Stan. Time your trip to pass the Royal Palace at 12.15pm (on Saturdays; an hour later on Sundays), when a crowd gathers to witness the changing of the guard. Don't be deceived by the number of people present into thinking that Stockholm has suddenly acquired a mass of tourists; most of the audience for this military parade are the families of the servicemen. The honour is shared around the Swedish military on a rota system, so every soldier gets his 15 minutes of fame. Super troopers, indeed.

Lunch on the run

In the opulent district of Östermalm, the local market looks like Harrods' food hall and sells a zoo's worth of cold cuts from warm-blooded beasts: elk, bear and other non-endangered Nordic nosh. You have never assembled so exotic a picnic.

Cultural afternoon

You have four brief hours, from noon to 4pm, to visit Millesgården, the home of Scandinavia's most famous sculptor. The tough part is finding it; take the Tunnelbanan to Ropsten, then a bus to Torsviks. What sets this place apart from the dozens of other museums in Stockholm is that Carl Milles spent most of his life constructing his own extraordinary epitaph. The garden terraces that tumble down towards the steely water are populated by a large, dysfunctional family of sculptures.

An aperitif

For the first (and probably last) time in the 48 hours series, I recommend you take an early evening drink in your hotel room - not to save cash, so much as to experience the social stigma attaching to the Swedish drinker. Even if you've never thought you had an alcohol problem, you will when you visit a Stockholm off-licence - known as Systembolaget. Ten of these are dotted around the

city. You enter an alarmingly sanitised hall where the beer and wine are kept well out of reach. Like a schoolboy buying condoms, you have to queue up and ask the assistant clearly for your chosen poison.

Demure dinner

Stockholm New magazine says the city has changed "from a stale mashed potato and gravy outpost into one of Europe's most dynamic gourmet metropolises". That's going a bit, but certainly my best meal this year was at Cliff Barnes. There was something in the air that night.

The three surprises about this place are (a) that anyone should name a restaurant after a hit player in an Eighties series such as *Dallas*; (b) that it would be located in the middle of what looks like a giant sanatorium; (c) that the food should be such exceptional value for money. It's where they play the right music, too; the only reason you can get a table on a Saturday night is that it's a couple of miles north west of the centre.

Sunday morning: go to church

Stockholm's citizens still shed tears for their lost humanitarian, Prime Minister Olof Palme - assassinated in 1986. He is buried at Adolf Fredriks church, which poses prettily in the north of Norrmalm.

Bracing brunch

Almost all the city's restaurants and cafés are closed on Sunday mornings. Be first in the queue for the National Museum when it opens at 11am, and ignore the collection of paintings and sculptures in favour of the Atrium restaurant. The 60kr museum admission fee will soften you up for splashing out on a fishy feast.

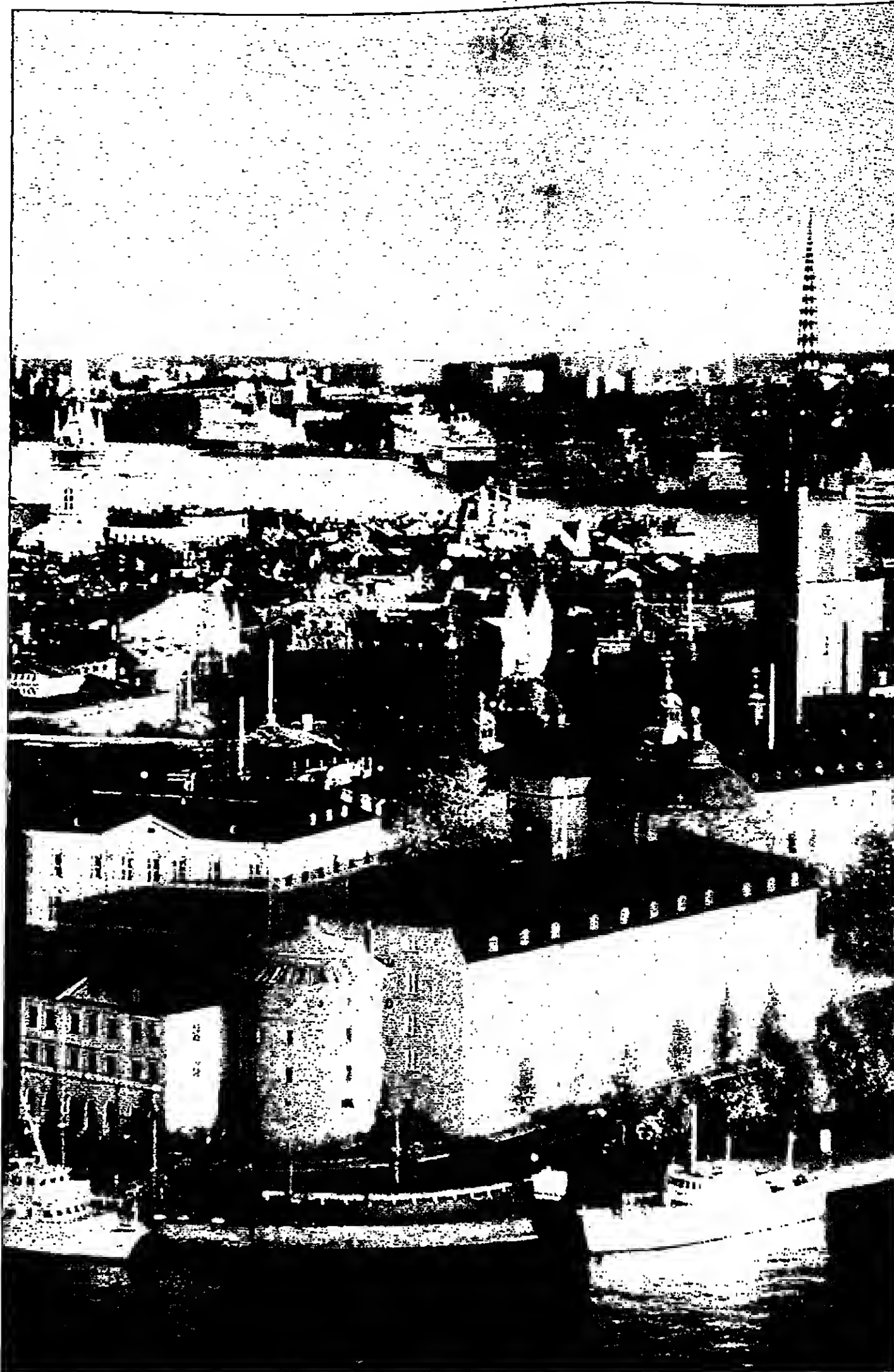
A walk in the park

Stepping just a little further takes you over the bridge to the island of Skeppsholmen. They call Stockholm the Venice of the north. In places it looks more like the Portsmouth of the east, or the Marmansk of the west. But walking around the green spaces of this pocket-sized, teardrop-shaped island reveals the capital in its best light and shade.

The souvenir

A tin of herrings with the brand name Abba, sold in most supermarkets. If the person in front of you grabs the last can, just say, "If you change your mind, I'm the first in line."

Simon Calder will donate his copy of 'Abba Gold' to the person who spots all the references from Abba songs AND comes up with the best anagram from the 24 letters of 'Agneta, Frida, Björn and Benny'.



Venice of the north - possibly: the watery city of Stockholm is made up of 14 islands

Photograph: Robert Harding

Of all the gin-joints in all the towns in all the world ...

Scientists say that our appreciation of the weirdness of 'coincidences' is flawed; our brains simply have not evolved to cope with big numbers. But Mark Rowe is still awestruck by the way he keeps meeting long-lost friends in unexpected places.

Two people, one big world. "Of all the gin-joints ..." moans Humphrey Bogart, as he spots Ingrid Bergman through a haze of smoke and whisky in that immortal scene from *Casablanca*. And it might well seem unlikely that the Hump and Ingrid characters bump into each other in an outpost of the Second World War.

A coincidence, you may well think. But most people reading this article have prob-

ably met someone they know while on holiday, whether in Newquay, New York or New Delhi. It may not always be in a gin-joint, but I am a serial people-meeter, and I am not the only one. Why does it happen?

During my childhood I invariably met schoolfriends, looking as sullen as myself, in tea shops in Cornwall or Skagness while spending rain-soaked family holidays. But during the last few years I have achieved several satisfying "meets".

After two months travelling around China in 1991, I decided on my last day to go for a cycle ride off the tourist trail on the outskirts of Peking. I wanted to see the "real China". Instead, along a dirt-track *luoguo*, I met the real Western Europe, in the shape of a friend I had not seen for three years. She had left college with no real plans, and had gone to China to see what turned up. I assume she had hoped it would be something more exotic than me, but for the first

time I pondered the odds of meeting a friend in a country of 1.2 billion people.

Another example: I once raised the cash for a trip to India by spending two months laying out motorway cones on the M25. One lad who shared biscuits and tea with me during the night shifts was also planning to go to India, and we joked about meeting in a country of 650 million people. Sure enough, as I slumped on to a bus travelling from Agra to Fatehpur Sikri, I was tapped on the shoulder and turned round to see Jim.

"It's all to do with social class," said Dr Susan Blackmore, a senior lecturer in psychology at the University of the West of England in Bristol. "The same sort of people are drawn to the same kind of holiday. Travelling through India, you will spend a lot of time in bus stations and on trains and at major sights - the places where there is a high concentration of foreigners."

"We think it is an amazing coincidence,

but really it's just that our brains have not evolved to cope with big numbers. We are still used to the cavernous mentality of small packs of people. To illustrate this, you can ask how many people you need in a room before there is a 50-50 chance of two sharing the same birthday. Most people might say 186 - or half of 365 - but in fact it is just 23, because that gives you the right number of possible pairs. The odds are lower than you think on such so-called coincidences."

Not always, though. Burma in 1992 remains my greatest achievement when it comes to meeting people in unexpected places. This was just before tourism to Burma expanded - and before I was fully aware of the atrocities committed by the military junta. In my first five days there I saw precisely two foreigners.

Then, one evening in Mandalay, I was sitting in my hotel's voluminous and silent reading room when a fellow tourist walked

in. Enthused by finally getting the chance to talk about what we had seen, we started by establishing a few reference points. "What did I do?" asked Victor. I had just started working for the *Grimby Evening Telegraph*, I told him. "Well, you've probably never heard of it but ..."

Victor had heard of it. He had been the *Grimby Telegraph's* production editor, but had left the week before I started, in order to travel round the world. And here we were in Burma. No other tourists, just two people from Grimby, a town which prides itself on its insularity, and whose population views a day trip to Hull as reason to get the passport out. Why go abroad when you've got Cleethorpes, I was often asked, during my three years in the town.

"That is weird, and does go off the scale of odds," said Dr Blackmore. "But it is only one coincidence, and you should think 'isn't that nice', and remind yourself of the peo-

ple you know who you didn't meet there, to keep it in perspective."

On my return to Bangkok I passed the night in the airport before an early flight home, talking with a man from Guildford who worked, and shared a desk with, my best friend from school; his veracity was established when he complained about the way my friend clinked his cup against his teeth when drinking coffee.

Dr Blackmore again: "The more outlandish the coincidence, the worse we are at being able to rationalise it. Most of us know about 1,000 people to recognise, and by association we have things in common with many more."

So spare a thought for poor old Bogie. Had he thought it through - *Casablanca* was, after all, a vital bolt-hole for those fleeing the Nazi advance - he would have stayed in Europe, and saved himself the heartache of meeting up with Ingrid again.

GREEN CHANNEL

We're all familiar with the three Ss - Sun, Sea and Sand. But isn't there a fourth? No, not that. News from around the world seems to indicate it's probably Smog.

Tourists are fleeing from South-east Asia because of it. A friend of mine visiting Paris last week was choking on it, despite the city's attempt to cut down pollution by banning even-numbered cars on Parisian roads. And our own London Tourist Board is also concerned about pollution levels in our tourist-packed city. How can we deal with this problem? Have an "integrated transport policy", says the London Tourist Board, which this week launched its vision for the year 2010 encouraging the use of public transport.

Other European cities have been taking an organised approach to transport for a while now. In Vienna, the trams whisk you gracefully through the city, and passengers are, incredibly, trusted to buy and stamp their own tickets on every journey.

Not surprisingly, Switzerland's public transport is famous for running like clockwork. And in Copenhagen, tourist maps indicate numerous locations around the city where you can extract a "city bike" from a cycle stand on the pavement for 20 kroner. You can then cycle to your chosen tourist sight, park your bike at the nearest bike stand and retrieve your money. Choose from a bus, a train or another bike to take you back again. Smog, in Copenhagen, is not an issue.

Sue Wheat

JONATHAN KADAN

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PICARDIE

What's Serbian for 'Piste'?

Where will you be skiing this season? North America or Italy may be your choice, but some national tourist boards are keen for you to try somewhere new. Stephen Wood explains.

Almost a year ago, I stopped to enquire about skiing in Serbia at its national tourist board's stand in the World Travel Market, London's annual shindig for the trade. "Sure, you can ski in Serbia," said one of the staff, as if nothing could be simpler. She gave me a map of the country, and explained how to apply for a visa: then she went back to folding leaflets.

Organising a trip to Serbia is easier now because it is one of the new destinations in this year's brochures. Thomson is offering holidays in what it calls "Yugoslavia's best-kept secret", the resort of Kopaonik, about 175km south of Belgrade. It has had much more encouragement from the Serbian tourist office than I got: as a result it can charge as little as £275 a week in late January for self-catering accommodation, with a learn-to-ski package, equipment hire, and a lift pass thrown in.

The big six ski operators add new destinations to their brochures for most seasons, and after a good '96/97 (and with the pound still strong against most other currencies) they are particularly bullish this year. So apart from the organic growth in currently popular countries – a whole slew of packages to resorts in north America and Italy has been introduced – and the dramatic return of Switzerland owing to the favourable exchange rate, the brochures have also expanded geographically, notably into northern and eastern Europe.

Why do the operators keep adding fresh snowfields? Andrew Russell, of Inghams, says simply that "we aim to match customer demand, and there are some customers who will always want to go somewhere new". But for Andy Perrin, marketing director of Crystal, going into new areas is some-

thing of a crusade: "It makes a statement about the kind of company we are," he says. "Our customers are people who chose to do something more exciting than lie on the beach for a week. The big tour operators, for whom skiing is only a small part of their business, tend to concentrate on a few established resorts where the volume is high. That's the bankers' approach to ski operating: it's not ours."

If Perrin is blowing his own trumpet, he has a right to do so. The most remarkable innovation in this season's major brochures is Crystal's packages to Gudauri, in Georgia. The resort, at 2,123m in the Caucasus mountains, is a place for serious off-piste skiing: the little piste map in the brochure shows just five ski-lifts, but seven landing points for helicopter shuttles, and the holidays are priced (from £1,200 up to £2,200) according to the length of the skiing descents – with a maximum vertical drop of 20,000 metres a week.

"We featured Gudauri in our brochure several years ago," says Perrin, "and a couple of hundred customers booked to go there. But we had to cancel it because of political unrest and fuel shortages: the flights went via Moscow then, and no one could guarantee that there would be enough fuel to continue on to Tbilisi." Now that the area is stable, and BA is running direct flights to Tbilisi, Perrin has been able to bring Gudauri back into the brochure. "I've never forgotten it... the Caucasus is unlike any other ski area. It's breathtakingly beautiful; and when you are up in the mountains you can see no sign of mankind – no villages, roads or pylons."

Perrin says Gudauri is aimed at

skiers "for whom memorable skiing is the key factor rather than cost"; going to the other extreme, Finnish Lapland – which both Crystal and Inghams have introduced this year – is, he says, for "people who don't want to ski every day". Inghams's Andrew Russell admits that "the downhill skiing there is limited, but it's an exotic area with lots

of other attractions – including Santa Claus. We sold out the Christmas period very quickly, and we've found that even in January families still want to visit Santa."

Introducing a new destination is always something of a gamble. Norway, which Inghams also introduced this year, "hasn't worked as well as we expected", says Russell. (Asked whether it would be in next year's brochure, his reply was a measured "I don't know".) But the risks are reduced when the operator has support from the local tourist board. Russell says that Finnish Lapland has been under consideration for a couple of years, but Inghams is offering it now because of an approach from Finland – which gets an amazing 15,000 visitors to Lapland from

Britain in December but averages a paltry 1,500 a month for the rest of the year, and is therefore eager to appear in package-tour brochures.

For its venture into Serbia, Thomson has also had local support, including a weekly charter flight laid on by the national airline, JAT. Primarily a beach holiday company (and presumably the main target of Andy Perrin's barb about the big tour operators' approach to skiing), Thomson is now developing its ski range. This year, it has dramatically increased its packages to north America (thanks to Monarch's twice-weekly charter flight to Denver, which Thomson instigated), and has already seen sales increase by 45 per cent.

The Serbian packages compete at the other end of the market, with Bul-

garia. "Don't ask me why, but Bulgaria is a popular destination for British skiers," says Ian Simkins, Thomson's ski marketing manager. He thinks that "Serbia offers a better-quality product at a comparable price. I can't deny that there is an 'awareness' problem about Serbia; but on the other hand there is political pressure on the country to make our skiing holidays succeed. Croatia has direct charters, and so has Slovenia – if we withdraw, Serbia will be the odd one out." The tourist organisations, he says, are under a lot of pressure, which obviously benefits us. Because it means they're very flexible in helping us."

Flexible and helpful? Times change. The Serbia stand may be worth another visit at next month's World Travel Market.

Thomson goes to Serbia: the resort of Kopaonik is, the tour operator maintains, "Yugoslavia's best-kept secret"



SKI TIP

Before your ski holiday, make sure that you visit an artificial ski slope. Skiers use unfamiliar equipment which may initially seem cumbersome – a skiing lesson here in the UK will allow you to develop a feel for your equipment and can save a day spent in the resort.

Chris Exall

(For more on skiing lessons, see page 8)

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8/DAYS OUT



The powder room

You don't need even need to venture outdoors if you want your children to learn how to ski. At the Tamworth SnowDome, you can slide around on a carpet that's whiter than snow and possibly a little more powdery, as Brigit McConville found out.

The venue

Despite the name it's not a dome, and, technically, it's not natural snow either - but who cares? This is still the only place in Britain where you can ski on cold white powder all the year round. At this time of year it is packed with families getting a bit of practice before taking off for skiing holidays, so if you want a lesson make sure you book well in advance.

There is a row tow on one side of the slope, and on the other a travelator, which is like an escalator without steps. The snow slope is 150m long and 30m wide, which means you can get a decent run from the top, or take the tow rope half-way up for a more sedate descent. The grooming machine comes out four times daily to keep icy patches to a minimum.

As part of a big, modern leisure complex, SnowDome has all the romance of a skating rink; no natural light, constant Muzak and fruit machines in the bar/café. On the other hand, the artificial environment of the ski slope means no biting winds, a constant temperature of 2-4 degrees centigrade and near perfect snow conditions.

The visitors

Brigit McConville, a freelance journalist, took her children Maeve, 12, and Arthur, nine, to SnowDome in Tamworth, where they had a skiing lesson.

Arthur: When I started off I thought that it was a bit tricky and I wasn't really enjoying it. It was quite hard, and I kept sliding downhill. The back of my skis would go wonky, which made me fall over, and I thought, "I can't do this." But that was because I wasn't bending my knees, and

when I got the hang of it and learnt to snow-plough it was really cool.

Then we got to go on the rope tow and that was fun, although I didn't think it would go so fast. I learnt to do loads of turns, and now and then I fell over. Sometimes I got my skis crossed going downhill, and I didn't know where they were. Falling didn't really hurt because it was quite soft snow. It looked like flour.

Sometimes I'm really determined, and when Maeve zoomed past me I really wanted to do that too, but I realised I would

need more lessons first. I was trying my hardest and after a while I was quite good at it, and I got better and better.

When I went really fast I didn't know what to do; my legs were in the wrong place and I crashed into the barrier at the bottom. One time I skied over the edge of a snow-board that had crashed - that was quite scary. I hurt my ear a bit because I slipped when I was on the rope tow and caught my ear on the rope.

Peter, our instructor, was nice, and the lesson was helpful as I'd never been on skis before - except once on a dry slope, which was easier.

By the end I could do a bit of turning to the left, but not to the right. I could snow-plough and I could go down a steep hill. I've got quite a long way to go to be a good skier, but I thought I was doing quite well for my age.

I wouldn't like to go too many times; it would get boring.

Maeve: I was very impressed when I saw the SnowDome: it looked really fun. The skiing lesson was a bit boring at first but I understand the instructor has to make sure you can do stops before you go to the top.

To start with we had to put on one ski and scoot around; then two skis and shuffle and turn circles. Then we stepped sideways up the slope, which was hard work, but it was fun going down again touching your head, shoulders, knees and toes. We had a really good teacher.

I wanted to get on to the tow rope but when I did I found it was pretty hard on your arms. It kept going down to the

ground, and I had to try to pull it up. Once I slipped off, which hurt my legs, and I couldn't get out of the way of the person behind me, which was pretty scary. But I didn't fall down once.

I'd already learnt to turn on a ski slope in Scotland, but I learnt to do a bit more and got to go quite fast - though not too fast, as I don't like being out of control.

It's good that there were snow-boarders there as well - mostly teenagers wearing strange hats - because it's something different.

The snow was very, very realistic. It was snow, wasn't it? I'd definitely like to go again, every week, although I'd settle for every month.

The deal

SnowDome is at Tamworth Leisure Island, River Drive, Tamworth, Staffs. For details about sessions ring SnowDome reception on 01827 67905, or call 0990 000011 for lesson bookings (it is best to call several weeks in advance).

Prices range from £14 (adult) and £9 (junior) for one hour's ski/snow-board session mid-week, to £18 (adult) and £12 (junior) at weekends. Group ski lessons cost up to £20 (adult) and £14 (junior) whereas snow-board lessons cost £22 (adult) and £17.50 (junior). Private lessons are also available.

How to get there: by train go to Tamworth station; taxis from the station to the SnowDome cost about £2. Or, by car, take the exit from M42 on Junction 10, the SnowDome is just off the A5. There is ample free parking.



Maeve and Arthur bend their knees at the SnowDome. Photos: Newsteam

ARE WE NEARLY THERE?

Literary days out for children

The World of Beatrix Potter (01539 488444) at the Old Laundry, Bowness-on-Windermere, provides an undercover walk that leads children through different village and woodland scenes to meet life-size figures of Beatrix Potter's characters. There is also a short film about the writer's life, and a video wall to introduce the stories. Open 10am-4pm, adults £2.99, children £1.99.

At nearby Hawkshead, the **Beatrix Potter Gallery** (01539 436355) displays 100 or so original illustrations from the stories. The collection is housed in what were once the offices of Beatrix Potter's solicitor husband. Open until 2 November, 10.30am-4pm. Adults £2.60, children £1.30.

The Brontë Parsonage Museum (01535 642323) in Haworth, West Yorkshire, contains the Brontë sisters' furniture and personal belongings, re-creating the atmosphere of their family home. Exhibits include their earliest writings, their clothes, and Emily Brontë's writing desk, with its contents as she left it. A visit will give children the opportunity to join the Angrians, the junior branch of the Brontë Society. The Angrians encourages young interest in the writings of the Brontës through competitions, poetry and story writing, and by organising occasional workshops in Haworth. Membership costs £5. The museum is open 11am-4.30pm. Adults £3.80, children £1.20, concessions £2.80.

The Nene Valley Railway (01780 784444), at Wansford station, near Peterborough, is the home of Thomas, named after The Reverend Wilbert Awdry's *Thomas the Tank Engine*. On bank holidays and half-terms children can ride behind Thomas on his own branch line which passes through a "haunted" tunnel. At other times visitors can see him at the station, and enjoy a day out travelling by steam train. There are more than seven miles of track through the picturesque Nene Valley. An adult rover ticket, giving unlimited travel for a day, costs £7.50; a child ticket costs £3.50. Services operate on Sundays from mid-February, weekends from Easter to October, Wednesdays from May and some mid-week services in summer.

The Shrewsbury Quest (01743 243324), Shrewsbury, offers adults and children the chance to take part in a medieval mystery, based on the Brother Cadfael books by Ellis Peters. Cloisters and a garden planted with herbs that would have been present in Cadfael's time provide the backdrop to the quest. As well as hunting for clues, visitors can make an illuminated manuscript or practise calligraphy. There is a Young Questor mystery for children to gather clues to make a medieval rune. The restaurant has meals such as the "Abbot's lunch" to enhance the 12th-century atmosphere. Open daily, 10am-4pm. Adults £3.95, children £2.50, under fives free, and concessions £3.20.

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INT32

A Hardy showing of Wessex folk

'Tess of the D'Urbervilles' comes alive at Dorchester's museum - as do a smugglers' den and a riddle book. Fiona Macculay unravels a few surprises.

An enormous mask with cow horns and goggle eyes is the first thing to surprise you in the galleries of Dorchester County Museum. This is the Ooser, a pagan creature, his body draped with cow skin and sackcloth, whose role in Dorset folklore was to frighten people.

The galleries are the latest project of Bremner and Orr Design Consultants, creators of the Roald Dahl Children's Gallery in Aylesbury. Their brief here was to display the finest Thomas Hardy collection in the world, along with smaller collections of lesser known Dorset writers such as John Meade Falkner and William Barnes. They needed to make them appealing to children, without excluding the literary enthusiasts.

This exhibition is not for toddlers, but for children who can read small-print books for themselves. Teenagers and those a bit younger will find plenty to interest them - and adults, too. Bremner and Orr have used striking props to bring the collections to life.

Hardy had a great love for the old ways of the countryside and descriptions of them weave their way through his work. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge* he de-

scribes a skimmity ride, which is brought to life in one of the displays. Models of a husband and wife who were accused of mistreating each other would be tied back-to-back on a donkey and paraded through the streets. Some of the musical instruments and kitchen hardware that might have been used by the accompanying procession to create as much din as possible are shown, along with contemporary drawings and accounts of skimmity rides.

Hardy was not only a successful writer; he was also an accomplished architect. Max Gate (now owned by the National Trust) is the house he designed for himself near Dorchester; the galleries have a reconstruction of his study. There is also a replica of the huge Neolithic sarsen stone that he found in his

grounds, which further stimulated his interest in Dorset's ancient history.

There are displays about the women in Hardy's life and the characters behind the books. In particular *The Mayor of Casterbridge* and *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. A touch-screen computer offers up lots of gems, including an interview with Julie Christie on the set of the film *Far from the Madding Crowd*.

One of the most interesting characters among lesser known writers in the galleries is William Barnes, a great friend of Thomas Hardy. A Victorian renaissance man, he was a teacher, poet, antiquarian, priest and linguist (with a working knowledge of 60 languages). You can sit at his desk and look at a model of him in the odd, archaic dress that he always wore. Other aspects

of his life can be explored on a computer, complete with recordings of his songs (including "Linden Lea") and poems in Dorset dialect.

Children too young for Barnes's poetry or Hardy's novels will find the perfect introduction to Dorset writers in *Moonfleet*, a ripping yarn by John Meade Falkner, about a boy, John Trenchard, who discovers, in a smugglers' den, a clue to the hiding-place of the pirate Blackbeard's diamond. A large panel illustrates John trying to hide from the smugglers among the rats and coffins. Beside it is a barrel where you search for the clue in a secret compartment.

Younger members with a cheeky sense of humour will also enjoy being introduced to the Dorset tradition of riddle-making. There's a riddle book to look through - one example, for instance, reads "Under the water, over the water and never touches the water. What am I?" (A woman crossing a stream with a pail of water on her head.)

Here you can follow clues to various objects in the galleries. All those which are answers to clues are clearly marked, so if unravelling a riddle proves too difficult, you can do it the other way round and fit the object to a riddle.

Dorset County Museum, High West Street, Dorchester, Dorset (01305 262735). Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, adults £2.35, children and concessions £1.20, family tickets (two adults, two children), £6.50.

PIT STOP

After you've had your fill of literary Dorset, sample some of the county's edible offerings at Potter Inn (01305 260312) on 19 Durngate Street in Dorchester. There are always fresh flowers on the pine tables and, in winter, a real fire adds to the welcome at Sue Collier's charming establishment, tucked away down a narrow lane off the main shopping street. Everything on the menu - from traditional English breakfast (£3.70) to scones with jam and clotted cream (£2.25) - is available all day, and virtually everything, including some 20 or so ice creams, is home-made. High-chairs and children's drinking mugs are there for younger customers, who can have smaller portions at reduced prices. Open 9.30am-5pm Mon-Sat.

From Egon Ronay's Guide And Children Come Too... (Bookman, £9.99)

هكذا من الاصل

The plants that come
in from the cold

'Brandysnap' dahlia
Photograph
Neil Holmes/GPL

From dahlias to geraniums, now is the time to prepare for frost. But which warm-weather plants can you leave to brave the winter outside, and which should you lift and store indoors?

There are still some exquisites who sneer at dahlias, thinking them gross and vulgar. But now that they have appeared in full, shining splendour on the front of the latest edition of the glossy *Gardens Illustrated*, surely their apothecosis is complete? Like aspidistras and giant marrows, they have a touch of the music hall about them, and even their most ardent devotees have to admit that there are some sulphurously evil yellows among the dahlia tribe. But there are also some gorgeous terracottas, such as the swirling, sunny 'Haman Gold' and the neat, rich flowers of 'David Howard', set against dark bronze foliage.

I can scarcely remember a year when dahlias have looked better. September, with its still, sunny days, suited them perfectly. There were no high winds to snap them from their supports, no heavy downpours to melt the petals into mush. The beautiful dark-leaved 'Grenadier' is the best thing in our garden at the moment. It has the same foliage as the red-flowered 'Bishop of Landaff', but the flowers are double, beautifully formed and without the Bishop's distracting eye.

As anyone who listens to *Gardener's Question Time* knows, there's a splendid mystique attached to dahlias: the disbud-ling, the lifting, the storing, the dusting with flowers of sulphur. It all sounds so reasonable, but with us the storing tends to be followed by the things GQT doesn't talk about: the shrivelling, the eating by mice. These kinds of problems forced us to reappraise the purist approach, and now we leave the tubers in the ground, well mulched with beech leaves.

There are disasters associated with this course of action, too, but not so many as when we used to lift dahlias. There were some exceptionally cold spells last winter and we lost three plants, including the fine, spiky red cactus dahlia 'Alva's Doris'.

But leaving dahlia tubers in the ground is an option only if you live in the relatively mild south or west of the country. Any day now the dahlia roadshow is going to be

brought to an abrupt end by frost. What do you do then if you live in a chilly area?

First, cut down the blackened stems, leaving about 6in intact, and ease the tubers gently out of the soil with a fork. Shake off any soil - lifting is much easier if the soil is relatively dry - and label the tubers as you lift. By next May, when you come to plant, all the tubers will look exactly the same and, without labels, colour co-ordination will be a lottery.

Stand the tubers upside down to drain any moisture away from inside the hollow stems. They should dry off within a fortnight. Then trim off the stems and stack the tubers in wooden apple boxes lined with newspaper. When the box is full, cover the tubers with compost, chipped bark or Vermiculite that you have dampened very slightly. Stack the boxes in a dry, cool and frost-free place. Set mousetraps nearby. I find chocolate a good bait for mice.

Dahlias are not the only plants that, in cold areas, need special treatment to get through the winter. Perennial tropeolums, nasturtium-flowered climbers such

as *Tropeolum tuberosum* 'Ken Aslet', also grow from tubers that will rot and melt if they are left in the ground through a severe winter. The tubers are yellow, marbled with purple, much more interesting than a dahlia's.

The trumpet flower is red on the outside, yellow inside, held elegantly on a long stem. The leaves are good, too, greyish-green and lobed. In fact, the only problem with this climber is its tender disposition. But its home is South America - Columbia, Ecuador, Peru - so it is not surprising that it doesn't like our winters.

When frost has knocked back the foliage, cut off the dead stems at the base of the plant, clear them away, and lift the tuber carefully with a fork. Brush off as much soil as you can before drying it off gently in a warm place such as an airing cupboard. Then clean up the tuber, getting rid of any last bits of soil or dried-off root before storing it in a dry, frost-free place until planting-time next spring.

Geraniums are also now growing in borrowed time, but here you need to act before the first frost, rather than after. Left to themselves in a frost-free situation such as a conservatory, geraniums never become dormant. They just go on growing, as *Tropeolum tuberosum* 'Ken Aslet', also grow from tubers that will rot and melt if they are left in the ground through a severe winter. The tubers are yellow, marbled with purple, much more interesting than a dahlia's.

ANNA
PAVORD

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If they are growing outside in pots, you have two options: either overwinter the whole plant, or take cuttings and overwinter those rather than the parent. If you've got room you can do both.

If you want to take cuttings, do it before you lift the plants, choosing healthy side shoots and cutting them just above a leaf joint. A cutting about 3in long is ideal. Choose shoots with no flower buds if you can. If you can't, trim off the flower buds along with the lowest leaves. Then trim each cutting to just below a leaf joint and stick all the cuttings round the edge of a 5in pot of compost. Do not cover. Let the pot soak in a saucer of water until the compost is damp but not saturated. Keep the cuttings somewhere light and frost-free over winter.

Keeping the plants themselves is a bulkier business, and the method you use depends on the resources available. If you've got a light porch or conservatory, you can just bring the geraniums in, still in their pots, and overwinter them undisturbed. Cut down on the watering, so that the plants just tick over, otherwise they will get very high and leggy. Take off dead leaves and flower heads which might otherwise turn mouldy.

If you don't have that option, lift the plants before the frost gets them, shake the soil from the roots and cut the stems down to about 4in. Get rid of any leaves that are left on these stems. Then cut back the roots by about a third. Line an apple box with newspaper and half fill it with old compost (the contents of a used Grow-hag are ideal, if you have one) or coir. Stack the cut-down plants in the box, close but not quite touching. Tip some more compost round them and firm it gently down. Water the compost and leave it to drain, before storing the box somewhere light and frost-free.

When the cut-down plants begin to resprout, you can use the new growth to make more cuttings. Then, when frost-free times begin to loom again over the horizon, you can pot up the plants and give them more encouragement to grow.

But that all seems a very long way away. Meanwhile, I've got another overwintering problem to solve. The front border is edged with clumps of fat, fleshy, succulent *cheverias*, as big as cabbages. Somehow, I have to ease these out of the ground and get them into pots for the winter, but without breaking any of their juicy, spoon-shaped leaves. And what am I going to do with the baby *cheverias* that are clustered like bantam chicks under the mother plant's great skirts? Leave them attached, or break them off and pot them up separately? My instinct is to leave them be until spring.

WEEKEND
WORK

Finish planting spring bedding plants such as wallflowers, polyanthus and forget-me-nots. These last make an excellent undercarpet for tulips, especially the dark mahogany 'Abu Hassan' or the lily-flowered 'White Triumphator'. Water the plants in well. September has been very dry in most parts and wallflowers, generally uprooted from open ground for sale, will need help in settling into new quarters.

Clean up the ground between strawberry rows, getting rid of weeds and unwanted plants that have rooted themselves. Mulch between the rows with well-rotted compost or manure. Lilies are best planted in early October as soon as this year's growth has died down. The problem is getting hold of them. It suits suppliers better to dish them out in spring. The martagon lily is a hardy, lime tolerant basal-rooting species that will thrive in sun or shade. Plant the bulbs about four inches deep and nine inches apart on a sprinkle of sharp sand to deter underground slugs.

Mulch in spring with compost or leaf mould. The ordinary martagon has dirty purple flowers with ginger anthers, but there is also a lovely white form, *L. pyrenaicum* is another basal-rooting lily tolerant of lime, with greenish yellow flowers spotted with black.

Gather late ripening apples and pears and store them in a cool, dry place, you can keep them in polythene bags with a few holes. I stick to wooden trays and newspaper.

Think about planting more fruit trees. The best specimens are likely to be grown in the open ground and will be lifted for delivery after leaf fall, usually from the first week in November. Cordon-trained apples are ideal for small gardens and make good screens between one part of the garden and another.

Cut back the dying stems of herbaceous perennials and compost them. Do not cut back penstemons. These should be left until March. Cutting back will encourage young growth which could get clobbered by frost.

CUTTINGS

Derek Longden, of Worthing, writes in response to my piece about places to sit in the garden (*Independent*, 12 July). "I was dismayed to read you have covered your new sitting-out space with beach pebbles. I believe that the foreshore is owned by the local authority and that therefore it is no more acceptable to collect pebbles for one's terrace than it would be to take plants from the public gardens or to steal books from the library... On noting your success, readers who may not be fastidious about their sources of supply, will be inspired and encouraged to do similar work on their own property... I should be glad if you would please warn your readers accordingly."

I am at fault for assuming that readers would not take the phrase "beach pebbles" as literally as Mr Longden. No. I have not been shovelling up the Chesil foreshore. The pebbles were delivered in sacks from our local gravel merchant. The technical description for the stuff we used is 10/6 grade pea gravel, available at £3.65 a 40kg sack.

Zooming up in a lift recently, I met Chris Brickell, editor of Dorling Kindersley's trio of essential reference books, the latest being the fine *A-Z Encyclopaedia of Garden Plants* (£55). He was off to China, plant-bunting. Plenty of good plants there, he said, but gardeners elsewhere have yet to set eyes on. But it's more of a challenge now to find plants that are both unknown and easy to grow

outside their natural habitats. A new book by Brenda McLean, a Fellow at the University of Liverpool, tells the story of an entrepreneur who operated in the golden age of plant collecting: Arthur Bulley (1861-1942) was a Liverpool cotton broker who paid legendary plant-hunters from Sikkim, China and Burma.

Bulley, a philanthropist and active Fabian, established many of these rare plants in his garden on the Wirral, which was always open to the public. Later, he established a nursery to supply as cheaply as possible the plants that he grew in the garden. It is now the University of Liverpool's Botanic Garden.

Bulley, who subscribed to the first Everest expedition, was adept at getting his collectors into the most difficult parts of the world. These included Bhutan, where he sent the young Roland Cooper. Bulley wrote direct to the Maharaja of Bhutan, requesting permission for Cooper to collect in his country, telling him it was "a service to mankind to get the fine things there must be on the Bhutan Himalaya into the gardens of the world". The Maharajah assented and got an Inverness plaid rug for his troubles.

Ms McLean's book, *A Pioneering Plantman*, draws on contemporary journals and gives an insight into the great collectors. It is the latest in the series of books on the collectors, sponsored by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, and the Stationery Office who publish it, at £29.

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Into the frozen wilderness:
Wendy Smith with two of
her Alaskan huskies
Photograph: Steve Hill/Newstream



Back from the grave – and into the land of ice

No one has ever driven a team of dogs 6,000 miles across Alaska. Now a young woman is to attempt the trip, to celebrate her recovery from cancer.

If you want to see courage personified, take a look at Wendy Smith, who on Tuesday set off for Alaska to make the first complete transit of the North American continent under husky power. A strongly-built Englishwoman of 35, with an attractively gentle voice, she is now at Bird Creek, near Anchorage, training her dog teams for the 6,000-mile marathon; but the fact that she is alive at all represents an extraordinary triumph, as much of determination and will power as of modern medicine.

In 1986, at the age of 24, she joined the army and rose to become a captain, assistant adjutant of 49 Field Regiment, serving in Germany. Then, in 1988, she was diagnosed as having Hodgkin's disease – cancer of the lymphatic system. Swelling lymph nodes filled the space between her heart and lungs, and pushed up into her neck.

Until that moment she had been prodigiously fit, running for the army, caving, playing badminton, and devoting six to eight

hours a day to physical training. Suddenly she was faced with a ghastly regime of chemotherapy, for which she travelled back and forth between her home in Swindon and the Queen Elizabeth military hospital in Woolwich.

In an attempt to defy reality, she continued to run a two-mile circuit round a lake near home. At first she could manage three laps – six miles; then she could do only two, then one. Finally, half-way round the first lap, she collapsed. "I got real jittery there by the water," she recalls, "because I had to admit to myself,

for the first time, that my body was in big trouble." She was on the ground for 20 minutes, "having a good think", before she managed to drag herself home.

Like countless other cancer patients, she found that the treatment made her feel sicker than the disease, and reckoned the ordeal the worst she has ever had to face: "I lost my hair, my appearance, my fitness, my energy. I had moments of terrible depression." The nadir came when agonising abdominal pains were diagnosed as an

infection in the gut: for a week her family thought she was dying, and so did she.

She began to dream about her own funeral: "What surprised me was the fact that I was so cheerful. I was looking up out of the grave, and I kept making these quips about what a dreadful hat so-and-so had on."

Nevertheless, her regime became so appalling that there were moments when she felt that dying would be the easiest option.

The "first chunk of light" came when she read the jockey Bob Champion's account of how he had beaten cancer and fought back to win the Grand National. She found it inspiring that another immensely physical person had survived the disease.

After nine months a sudden, unexpected recovery set in, and doctors pronounced her cured. Scared that the cancer might return, and that she might not have much time left, she resigned her commission six months early and joined Outward Bound as an instructor.

To find out whether her body would do the things she wanted it to, she ran a half-marathon within a month of leaving hos-

pital, went on a couple of mountaineering courses, and travelled widely. She led treks in the Borneo jungle, and, becoming fascinated by TE Lawrence, followed one of his routes across the southern Jordanian desert on camels. The journey took place during Ramadan, and she and her companion neither ate nor drank during daylight hours. She recalls, "Climbing mountains in that climate, without drinking, produces a steep learning curve."

In the past three years she has led treks in Morocco, the Pamirs, the Caucasus and Nepal, gaining the confidence to set up an expedition of her own. It was a chance sighting of huskies on television that decided her. The dogs seemed to her "to combine adventure with speed, excitement, the wilderness and winter scenery – also to give the chance of an intimate relationship with another species".

She first went to Alaska in the winter of 1993-94, working for free at a kennels where she fed, mucked out and repaired equipment – but also, from her first day, trained huskies. Next winter, 1994-95, she went out again, this time to train young dogs for Rick Swenson, five times winner of the Iditarod – the premier long-distance husky race. Swenson has ultra-modern kennels housing 250 dogs, at Two Rivers, west of

Fairbanks, but Wendy chose to go off on her own, with a small pack, to a cabin "in the middle of nowhere". With no road, no communications, no electricity and no water, she learnt to look after herself and her charges the hard way, in temperatures often 40°F below zero.

Now, for her great trek, she has been sold or given 20 Alaskan huskies by some of the world's leading mushers (drivers). After 10 days' training in Alaska, she and her four-man pack-up team will drive eastwards in their truck, covering much of their route in reverse.

The starting-point of the trek will be Seaport, on the coast of Maine, whence they will set off on 15 November. The first part of the route will be on dirt tracks, with Wendy – the sole musher – driving from a three-wheeled rig built for her by apprentices at Delta Training in Birmingham. As soon as enough snow is lying, she will transfer to a sledge, which will be much faster. The Canadian police have stipulated that she must have two snow-machines out, one ahead and one behind, to warn other snow-machines that there are dogs on the go.

Whenever no trail exists, one of the team will forge ahead, breaking a new track. At night the whole party will camp on sites

snow-shed out beside the trail or road. After a slow start, Wendy is hoping to average 50 miles a day, and to complete the route in six months. Because she will need a lot of fat, to keep out the cold, she will have every excuse for indulging her one serious gastronomic weakness – for mayonnaise and bacon sandwiches.

"We won't hit true wilderness till we get to Whitehorse, in the Yukon," she predicts. "That's when the real adventure will start. We'll travel the final 2,000 miles down the Yukon River, on the ice, and the temperature may hit 70 below." From previous visits she knows that the Yukon is "some mammoth river", a mile wide, with banks in places 400ft high.

As she left England, she professed herself undaunted by the physical hazards ahead. The only thing that frightens her is the possibility that she may fail.

But she has every intention of succeeding. Naturally, she wants to become the first person to make the crossing; but, far more than that, she is determined to show the world that cancer is not invincible, and to lighten other sufferers' darkness by "putting out a shining image of survival".

Funds are still needed to finance the expedition. Call 01865 863391 for further details.

DUFF HART-DAVIS

Treasure of the birch forest

This autumn, conditions are particularly good for mushrooms. Daniel Butler offers a guide to finding the tasty cep, or 'porcino'. Photograph: John Miller/GPL

Britain's woods at this time of year are full of gold. Across the country wild fungi, worth £15 a kilo wholesale and up to £40 retail, are thrusting their way through pasture and leaf mould. Given this largesse, there for the taking, one might expect a miniature repeat of the Klondike. Certainly that is the situation across the Channel, where every weekend the woods are alive with townsfolk collecting fungi of every conceivable shape, size and colour, both for their own use and for sale.

Things are different here, however. It seems that the British have an innate distrust of wild fungi. Most of us believe the only good mushroom is one which sits safely on the supermarket shelf, neatly wrapped in cling film and blue plastic.

This is pity, because Britain's mild, wet climate is ideally suited to many of the most delicious species of edible fungi, and this autumn conditions are particularly good. September, for example, saw a record crop of ceps (I picked well over 50 kilos in four one-hour forays). This was just the "first flush", and the Oc-

tober rains should trigger another burst of activity.

To take up mushrooming, essentially all you need is a good field guide. Novices, though, almost always make the mistake of collecting far too much. The result is that when they try to identify the two dozen species in their basket, the process takes hours, with the majority of the haul remaining in the "not sure" pile. Of those identified with absolute certainty, the chances are that none will be edible.

A far more sensible introduction is to search for just one particularly edible type. At this time of year this might be chanterelles (on gently sloping mossy banks beneath oak, chestnut or beech), parasols (in rough unimproved pasture) or, best of all, ceps (along damp woodland edges and hedgerows).

The last, *Bolus edulis* – sometimes known by its Italian name of *porcino* – is the perfect beginner's mushroom. Not only is it one of the best-lasting species of wild fungi, but it is relatively common and completely unmistakable, and when the ceps begin to "flush", the crop from a small area can be phenomenal.

Although ceps vary tremen-

dously in size (from a couple of inches to more than a foot in height), even beginners should have no trouble with identification. Most obviously, they have spongy gills totally unlike those of any shop-bought button mushroom, which are white at first before gradually turning yellow. As for shape, they have a bulbous cap sitting on top of a thick, smooth stalk which is pale and streaked faintly with fawn (avoid any hint of red). Meanwhile, the colour of the cap can vary from a pale *casse-au-lait* to a dark chocolate. There is only one mushroom, the brown birch bolete, which can seriously be confused with a cep, and this is also edible (if not so good).

The mushroom is normally found along woodland edges and hedgerows. According to the guides, it prefers deciduous trees, but my best spots are all on mossy banks below Norway spruce plantations. Disused railway lines are another excellent place to begin looking – as are golf courses.

"There's a bit of a knack finding them at first," says Clive Houlder. Britain's only full-time wild mushroom

gatherer and dealer. "But once you've spotted your first, you're away – it doesn't take long to tune your eyes in."

Those who don't yet have the knack, however, might take comfort from a fungi course. Many wildlife trusts run a autumn forays – two- or three-hour walks with a local mycologist who will point out interesting species and give lessons in identification. For more information, contact your local wildlife trust or the national headquarters in Lincoln on 01522 544400.

Such forays rarely focus on edible species, however, and many conservation bodies frown on widespread harvesting – particularly on nature reserves. More can be learned on one of the growing number of residential courses around the country, usually based around the skills of one expert. One of the most experienced of these is Dr Patrick Harding, a mycologist at Sheffield University who runs weekend courses.

Typically, these start on a Friday evening with a slide show and lecture. Next morning there is a talk on collection techniques, then a three-hour foray. After lunch, the results of the hunt are laid out in family groups, followed by a talk on edible species. On the Sunday he concludes with a talk on the folklore associations. For details, send an a.s.e. to Dr Harding at 36 Marshall Road, Sheffield S8 0GN.

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Go with the flow

If the idea of abseiling down a waterfall appeals to you, try canyoning. Eric Kendall reports on a cold, wet, terrifying sport ... that's totally addictive.

The rope is taut, water is tugging at your ankles and the cliff edge under your feet is like greased Teflon. There's only one way to go, and that's down.

Welcome to canyoning. If you ever fancied the thrills of caving while still being able to admire the view, this is the answer. Simply follow the course of a small river, coping with natural obstacles along the way, from boulders and deep pools to rapids and waterfalls.

The inevitable cold of the water takes your breath away, but it's the first big drop that concentrates the mind for all but habitual abseilers. Being lowered off a cliff is even worse when you're shin-deep in water, near a thundering torrent which will soon engulf you.

And that's the nub of it: this is a full-on experience. No extra batteries or qualifications are required, beyond the most basic level of fitness and a willingness to step into the void. For novices, all the tricky stuff is dealt with by the guide.

When the water hits, you can't think of anything else. Having a river empty its contents down the back of your neck while you dangle helplessly on a rope is shocking, exhilarating, violent. Now the unlikely process of erosion carving gorges

through granite and splitting mountain ranges becomes comprehensible, even obvious.

Given their combination of melt-water and vertical drops, the Alps are ideal for canyoning. Spain is also riddled with good terrain and has the perfect climate; the UK's smaller mountains mean shorter sections of appropriate river, which is no bad thing for first-timers. Wales, the

Lake District and Scotland all provide opportunities. Wherever you go, a bit of rain upstream can change conditions from tame to suicidal in a few hours, so be prepared to change your itinerary at short notice.

With a bit of experience some routes will be within reach of competent climbers, whose abseiling abilities will come in handy - con-

trolling your own rate of descent rather than being lowered, sack-of-potato-like, is not only more rewarding but ensures the guide can't leave you spinning on the end of the rope for everyone's amusement, driven like a turbine by the relentless flow of hattering water.

But for most people canyoning will remain a professionally accompanied adventure. Fast-flowing wa-

ter and tricky terrain make safety the paramount issue, and then there's the required equipment: wetsuits and climbing gear in an alpine gorge make you look like Jacques Cousteau on the set of *The Eiger Sanction*; in milder climates lightweight, fast-drying outdoor clothing is adequate; climbing gear is still essential.

Footwear is critical: staying up-

right on submerged boulders will reduce the day's pain levels significantly. Water sports shoes such as Salomon's Exydro provide fierce grip and drain freely once out of the water. Drybags are essential for cameras and other precious cargo.

Gentler variations are, of course, available, cutting out or skirting round the sheer drops and making the most of natural aqua-zooms to

White riot: no qualifications are required for canyoning, but you must be prepared to step into a void
Photograph: Nigel Shepherd

sluice you along. You still appreciate the forces involved, but this time they propel you rather than batter you. You don't even need to be a good swimmer to go for a walk in a river - so go and find out what water's really made for.

Who to canyon with
Nigel Shepherd (01286 872393) guides canyoning trips at home and abroad.

Craft na Caber (01887 830588), Kenmore, Scotland runs a local trip. Canyoning in Britain is often mixed with other activities - biking, walking, climbing - since the sections of river that can be tackled are relatively short.

Various operators run adventure sport holidays that include canyoning in the Alps and Spain: Tall Stories (01932 252002); Alp Active (01223 568220); Plus Travel (0171-259 1099); High Trax (01433 670186).

What to take
Climbing gear - helmet, harness, ropes, etc - available from climbing shops. Given the battering this gets, it's probably best to go with an organised group where equipment is supplied; the same goes for wetsuits.

For footwear and clothing, try specialists such as Ellis Brigham (0171-240 9577) and Snow & Rock (0171-937 0872). Water sports boots are ideal; trainers will do. Lowe Alpine's Dryflo T-shirts and long johns have extra warmth and quick-drying properties. Lightweight waterproof clothing won't keep you dry but will reduce wind chill. Avoid cotton clothing - it stays wet.

GAMES

BAWN O'BEIRNE RANELAGH DON'T JUNK IT - USE IT

For readers new to the "Don't Junk It - Use It" concept, this is the column that justifies your decision never to throw anything away. For older readers, the first line of today's design may help to explain what I have been doing for the past few months.

1. First, drink 172 bottles of wine, having taken care when extracting their corks (ideally with a "butler's friend" type of cork fork), and assemble the corks.

2. Drill holes through their centres.

3. String the corks together in lines. As corks come in different sizes, check to ensure your lines are all the same length. Leave a little space between each pair of corks and put a figure of eight knot at each end of the line to stop the corks sliding off.

4. Using fresh pieces of string, tie the double half-bitches between the corks to tie the lines together.

5. Untie the figure-of-eight knots and attach a string border to the outside of the mat, as plain or fancy as you wish.



The cork cork-mat, a combined bathmat, foot massager and excuse for wine-drinking

WIN A SCULPTURE PUZZLE

Computer-scanned and sliced, Sculpture Puzzles, from the Really Useful Games Company, really do bring a new dimension to jigsaws. The latest addition to their catalogue - timed to coincide with the release of an enhanced version of the *Star Wars* video, is a dark and threatening bust of Darth Vader, as seen above, nearly completed by Emily Shield of Ascot, encouraged by her father, David.

We have one copy of this attractive Sculpture Puzzle to give away to the reader who can come up with the funniest anagram of "Darth Vader Sculpture". Entries should be sent to: Sculpture Puzzle, Saturday Games, *The Independent*, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, closing date 20 October.



PANDORA MELLY GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Richard Meade, 58, triple Olympic three-day event gold medalist

Dogs like to play games, and if it's all done in a light-hearted way, then they thoroughly enjoy it. Our terrier puppy's game is to come and grab your hand, then she wants to be chased until she rolls over and lets you dribble her like a football. It's great fun.

We have a lurcher and a labrador, and their games are very different. Lurchers love chasing things, which is what they're bred to do. Ours is perfectly normal in daylight, but at night she behaves like a mad thing, and given the opportunity she'll rush out of the door in full cry. They're poachers' dogs, used for working after dark.

The last one we had was a gentle dog, but if any of the family were having a water-fight or something, he'd get quite steamed up about it, and you had to be very careful that he didn't try to join in and bite somebody, which he'd then very

much regret; and which we'd rather regret too.

Labradors are wonderful with children, and do not mind being clambered over, but I'm careful not to play silly games with ours because she's got a serious job of work to do. If you have gun-dogs, it's important to keep that side of things separate, and do nothing that in any way conflicts with their job as retrievers.

If you're consistent in your approach to dogs, then they respond tremendously well and will understand the difference between work and play. The analogy between children and animals is useful: both want to feel confident and secure and to have a structure to their lives, so it's important not to make fools of them, or do silly things that undermine their roles. But they must have fun.

Stray and unwanted dogs and cats may be handed in at the Dogs' Home Battersea at any time (0171-738-8759).

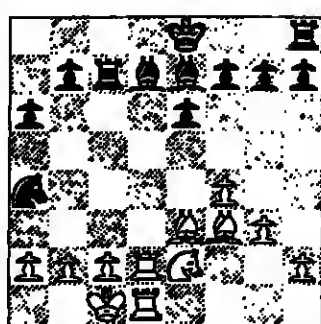
CHESS: WILLIAM HARTSTON

Michael Adams has been having one of the best performances of his career in Tilburg over the past couple of weeks. He has, in the past, scored some fine first places in events of mixed strength, but his undefeated score of 6½ points from 10 games in Tilburg, in a field that includes the world's top two players and full supporting cast, is outstanding.

In the 10th round, Adams improved his standing with a quick win against the top French player, Joel Lautier. Adams's unpretentious choice of opening led some observers to believe that he was willing to settle for a quick draw, but his early exchange of queens left him with a slight, nagging pressure that Lautier was unable to throw off.

Generally, if White enters an endgame in this type of Sicilian position, he does not want his pawn on f4 where it may be a target, or at least weaken White's potential control of the central white squares. On this occasion, however, Adams had appreciated some delicate features of the position.

After 8.Nxd4, his threat of Nf5 persuaded Black to play a6, after which White's development of his bishop to g2 put the black Q-side under pressure. The crucial moment came with 17.Ne2 (see diagram), unhooking the d-file and preventing Black from castling. Happy that his bishop was at last free to advance without being captured



by the knight, Lautier rushed out with 17...Bb5? (any of Bf6, Bc5 or Bb8 would be better) and found himself in trouble after 18.Bd4!

The double threat of 19.Bxg7 or 19.Be5 forced 18...f6, when 19.b3! led to acute embarrassment. After 19...Nc5 20.Bxc5 Black must lose either a pawn after 20...Rxc5 21.Bxb7 or a rook after 20...Bxc5 21.Rd8+.

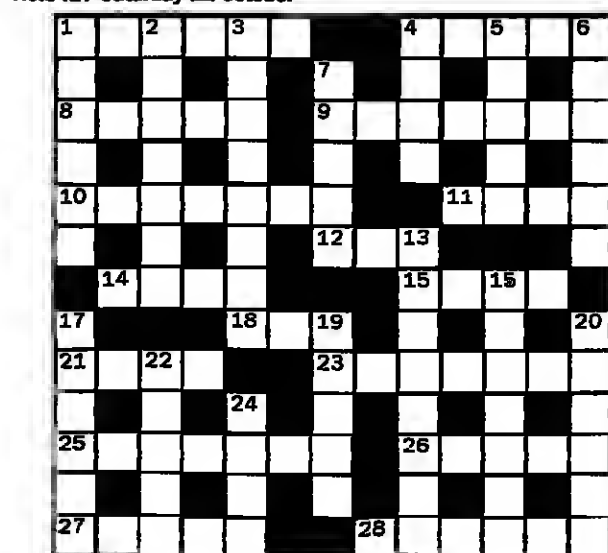
Lautier tried to muddy the waters with 19...Bb4, but Adams ended with a clean kill. 23...g6 24.Bxf6 or 23...Kc7 24.Be5+ is fatal.

White: Michael Adams
Black: Joel Lautier

1 e4 c5 13 Bf3 Bd7
2 Nc3 e6 14 0-0-0 Rb8
3 f4 d5 15 Rd2 Rb7
4 Nf3 dxe4 16 Rhd1 Na4
5 Nxe4 Be7 17 Ne2 Bb5
6 d4 cxd4 18 Bb4 f6
7 Qxd4 Qxd4 19 b3 Bb4
8 Nxd4 a6 20 bxa4 Bxd2
9 Be3 Nd7 21 Rxd2 Bxa4
10 g3 Ng6 22 Nc3 Bc6
11 Bg2 Nxe4 23 Bb5+ resigns
12 Bxe4 Ne5

CONCISE CROSSWORD

No.3427 Saturday 11 October



ACROSS

- 1 Horse's pace (6)
- 2 Fruit (5)
- 3 Light amplification device (5)
- 4 Doubter (7)
- 5 Sculpture (7)
- 6 Mail (4)
- 7 Tree (3)
- 8 Banner (4)
- 9 18th century queen (4)
- 10 Health resort (3)
- 11 Cereal crop (4)
- 12 Adult (5-2)
- 13 Mosque tower (7)
- 14 Change (5)
- 15 Recess (5)
- 16 Short sight (6)

DOWN

- 1 Cotton cloth (6)
- 2 Breathing aperture (7)
- 3 Personal ornaments (8)
- 4 Drink (4)
- 5 Proportion (5)
- 6 Sailing vessels (6)
- 7 Custom (5)
- 8 Hard wood (8)
- 9 Uninterruptedly (3-4)
- 10 Widespread (6)
- 11 Gemstone (5)
- 12 Greek city state (6)
- 13 Costume (5)
- 14 At liberty (4)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Belle, 4 Eying (Behaving), 10 Jupiter, 11 Later, 12 Coyne, 13 Spanish, 15 Cite, 17 Cider, 19 Reign, 22 Guts, 25 Bassman, 27 Tacit, 29 Timon, 30 Unarmed, 31 Ascent, 32 Nylon, DOWN: 2 Empty, 3 Lame, 5 Yalta, 6 Netting, 7 Eject, 8 Tryst, 9 Droll, 14 Pert, 16 Urge, 18 Ishmael, 20 Estuary, 21 Abate, 23 Undue, 24 Study, 26 Mango, 28 Camer.

BRIDGE: ALAN HIRON

East-West game; dealer East

North	
♠ 10 9 8 5 4 3	
♥ none	
♦ 8 7 6	
♣ A K 6 3	
West	
♠ 7 2	
♥ J 10 3	
♦ A Q 10 3	
♣ J 9 8 2	
East	
♠ none	
♥ A K 9 8 6 4 2	
♦ J 9 4	
♣ 10 7 5	
South	
♠ A K Q J 6	
♥ Q 7 5	
♦ K 5 2	
♣ Q 4	

This deal proved a valuable addition to my stock of hard luck stories. South planned the play intelligently, but he was misled by an even more intelligent defence.

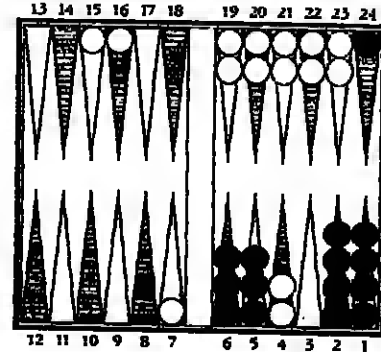
East opened Three Hearts, South overcalled with Three Spades and North raised directly to the slam. West led ♠ against Six Spades and declarer ruffed his three losing hearts on the table, coming to hand each time with a trump.

Prospects did not look good: East, marked with ♠A,K, could hardly hold ♠A as well as after his pre-emptive opening. However, South saw that he could bring pressure to bear on West if he held four or more clubs as well as ♠A. South played off his last three trumps. If West had come down to four clubs and ♠A alone, declarer planned to lead a low diamond from hand to establish his king.

Thinking ahead, West saw the danger. He had already parted with ♠3 on the third trump and his next two discards were carefully chosen. He threw 22 and followed with ♠Q. Convinced that West had started with five clubs and that ♠A was now bare, South led ♠2.

To his chagrin, he lost two diamond tricks and found that he could have taken four club tricks for his contract.

BACKGAMMON: CHRIS BRAY



At first glance Black's position here does not look as if he can take a double from White, and in the choueite from which this position was taken, three of the team passed when doubled. One brave man took. He promptly escaped his back man with a 65, and White missed the shot and had to pass the subsequent redouble. But who was right?

Black has two things in his favour. He leads in the race by 51 pips and he still has a four-point board. However, if he can't escape his back man, the racing lead will become meaningless and his fragile home board will quickly deteriorate - he may even be forced to expose a second blot. There are many sequences where White will have lost his market by his next turn, so the double here is mandatory.

Has Black got enough winning variations to give him a take? His plan is to escape his back man and not get hit. On each roll he will have a 30 per cent chance of throwing a six and escaping from White's home board. If he hasn't escaped within three rolls he is likely to find himself either behind a six-point prime or on the bar facing a closed board. When White moves a man from his 21-point into the outer boards, Black can gain time by pointing on the remaining man, or by picking and passing (hitting and moving the blot to safety).

The answer to all of this is that Black will in fact win from this position 30 per cent of the time, giving him a reasonably comfortable take. If the spare man on his five-point were on his two-point he would have a borderline take, and if both the spare men on his five- and six-points were on his one- and two-points he would then have to drop. The flexibility provided by those two men in the original position turns out to be critical. This is an excellent benchmark position for "one man back" problems - file it for future use.

كلمة من الأناضول



An eye for an eye

To help turn holiday snaps into Magnum masterpieces, Andrew Hasson (above), a professional behind the lens, brings the range of courses for amateurs into focus.

It's a task that usually takes only a fraction of a second, yet the results of taking one photograph can be magical. Sometimes, even the memory of a lost photograph can evoke a multitude of emotions. I'm lucky enough to earn a living taking pictures, but for some it's a hobby they just want to be better at.

Many years ago, while working as a photographer on a local paper, I was asked to teach a six-week evening course. I had no previous teaching experience but I quickly found out what my pupils really wanted. They didn't, of course, intend to photograph war, celebrities and semi-naked girls. They didn't want to be professional photographers. And they weren't interested in carrying around heavy equipment. They wanted a photograph to look like they thought it did through the viewfinder. They wanted pictures of their families and friends that wouldn't induce groans of "Oh no, here we go again, hurry up". And they wanted to be on holiday, or on a day out, and take pictures that would serve as more than memory joggers.

My own advice is fairly straightforward. For landscapes, first of all take your picture of the view, then move to a different position and try again. Get down on your knees or try to get a bit of extra height - stand on a rock, perhaps, or a chair. Take the view with plenty of sky, then try it with hardly any. Shoot lots and make sure the pictures are sharp.

For a portrait, check that the settings on the camera and flash are correct before asking your subject to hold still. If you spend a lot of time messing around with knobs and dials you'll end up with a picture of someone looking bored and fed up. My golden rule is that it doesn't matter what else is in focus as long as the subject's eyes are sharp. If you're taking pictures of children, get down to their level.

Lastly, when you get your pictures back from being developed, pluck up the courage to throw away the ones that aren't any good. They'll only gather dust and get in the way of your best achievements. If you get back from holiday with just a few excellent pictures, then show them off - and then only.

And these days you can learn how to take better pictures by actually going on holiday. From Wales to the Peruvian rainforest, photography holidays come in many shapes and sizes.

Phil Parish Photography (01945 585052) in Wisbech

has one- and two-day workshops for complete novices (with use of a black-and-white darkroom). Prices range from £45. Accommodation is available nearby and there are some facilities for disabled people.

Acorn Activities, of Hereford (01432 830083), offers a two-day course, with an on-site studio, processing facilities and "use of the latest equipment". As well as the disciplines of landscape and portrait, the course also covers "dramatic action" photography. Tuition costs £100 and there is a choice of nearby farmhouse or hotel accommodation, from £22 and £32 respectively.

HF Holidays, based in London (0181-905 9556), will take you to areas of outstanding natural beauty across the country (some walking is involved here). In the evenings discussions are held with knowledgeable and enthusiastic "leaders". Prices start at £320 for seven nights.

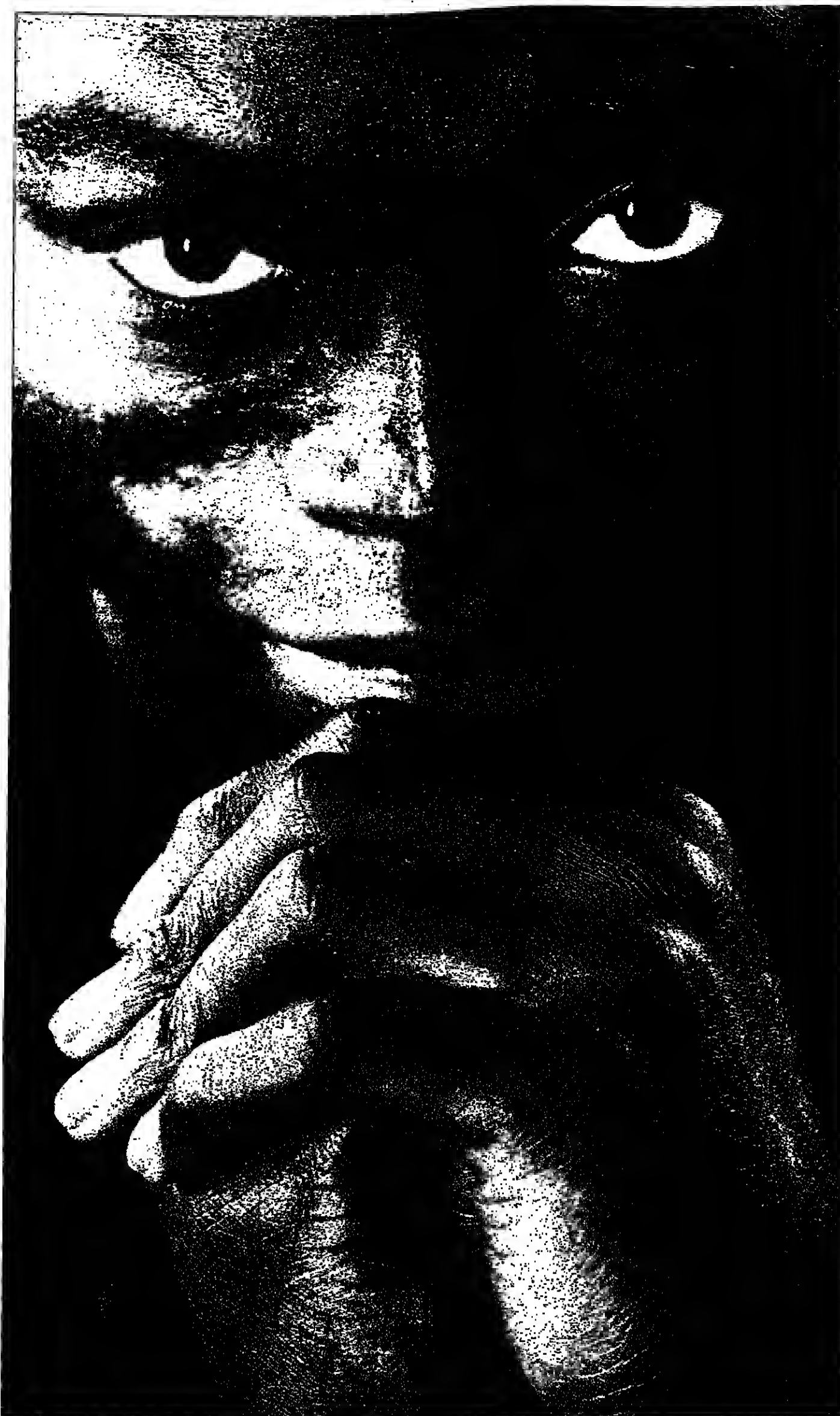
The Field Studies Council has several centres in England and Wales, concentrating mainly on landscape and nature photography. The council also runs an underwater week in Pembrokeshire in August, a black-and-white course at Flatford Mill in Suffolk and, intriguingly, a course in photographing fungi in Shropshire. Prices range from £250 per week, full board. Weekend courses are also possible.

The same organisation also offers tuition abroad, for those with a little more experience and larger budgets. The overseas programme has more specialised teaching and concentrates on wildlife. Destinations include the Alps, the Pyrenees, New Hampshire and Spitzbergen. Last year's 18-day trip up the Amazon was priced at £3,980, while a fortnight in the Peruvian rain forest was £1,990.

Photo Travellers (01483 425448) in Godalming operates holidays "designed by photographers, for photographers". The programme varies annually, featuring destinations "from the Azores to Zanzibar". Prices range from a modest £495 for a spring break in Cyprus, to the rather deeper pocketed £3,295 which will give you access to the wildlife of the Falkland Islands.

None of the companies featured here had hard-and-fast requirements for equipment. Liz Ballard, travel director of Photo Travellers, said "Some people come with compact cameras, and others with masses of lenses, it makes no difference. We try to help them see a potential picture that they wouldn't otherwise have noticed. The equipment isn't that important."

Photographers with masses of experience - your tutors and possibly your fellow holidaymakers - can make that pleasurable 125th of a second last you a lifetime. You'll have a holiday to change the way you see your holidays.



Seal, photographed by David Sandison: for portraits, it doesn't matter what else is in focus, so long as the eyes are sharp

Where the riverbank is wallpaper

If it's peace you're after, consider the village of Kelmscott, in the upper reaches of the Thames. Cive Fewins explores the muddy source of William Morris's inspiration.

We were not expecting to be confronted with skies of East Anglian proportions in a corner of Oxfordshire. However, this was the rather remote corner of the county near Lechlade, where it meets Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. The roads are sparse here, reflecting the eco-like nature of the countryside, and the fields are large and flat.

The area was even more inaccessible in William Morris's day. The great arts and crafts pioneer had seen what he called "the old house by the Thames" in a dream, and eventually made Kelmscott Manor his country home for the last 25 years of his life.

We set out on our walk to try to imbibe some of the qualities of this quiet stretch of countryside, which Morris referred to as his "earthly paradise". Kelmscott village is a collection of a few cottages and farmhouses. Most of them enclose a large central area of paddocks, closes and what are now back gardens, all surrounded by a straggling circular lane. And at the far corner of the village is Kelmscott Manor, a few yards up a metalled track leading to the River Thames. There are no shops.

But there is a pub that provides ample sustenance, as we were to discover at the end of our walk.

We parked near The Plough and set off along a marked track. We passed two cottages on our left, then the track met a field, at which point we turned sharp left along a field path, again clearly marked, that led directly to the Thames.

Be prepared for a surprise here. The first small footbridge is over a drainage channel that one might at first mistake for the striding Thames. At the far end of the next field a far grander sight awaits you - a new and rather splendid footbridge that spans the river. It is of ample height, so that the cabin cruisers that frequent this part of the river in summer can pass beneath it.

We did not cross the bridge. Instead we took the towpath - you cannot miss it, as the Thames Path follows the north bank of the river at this point - to the west.

It is said that Morris was inspired by the willows, the reed beds and the sedges along this section of the Thames. The dim colours of so many of his finest designs were derived from this countryside as he painted along the river on summer afternoons, rod and line in hand. In his long riverbank walks he would gather grasses, leaves, twigs and other natural materials from the hedgerows and take them back to the manor, where he would turn them into dyes.

My reveries about this were shortly interrupted by a father and son combination, en route to the

Thames Barrier, determined to complete the 160 miles by the end of the week. A mile or so later we came to the neatly tended Buscot Lock, where we were able to cross the river and amble up the lane to the group of houses that comprise Buscot Village.

In fact they are - or were - nothing but a satellite of the great house

and park just on the other side of the nearby A417 Farringdon-Lechlade road. Now, however, the National Trust-owned hamlet sports a post office and a separate shop. To our delight, we found that the shop also serves hot coffee.

Refreshed, we walked up the

A417 for a quarter of a mile before taking a sharp left turn (again, there is a sign indicating a footpath) down towards Buscot Wharf. Almost immediately we left this track, taking a path across the centre of a newly-harvested field towards the distant hamlet of Eaton Hastings.

In the church here, one of Mor-

ris's lifelong friends and collaborators, Edward Burne-Jones, created two small windows for Morris's company during restoration work in 1872-74. Eaton Hastings today is more a collection of scattered cottages than a village. A multitude of odd bumps in the nearby fields indicates a previously much bigger settlement.

From Eaton Hastings we retraced our steps along the south bank of the river, eventually turning right to cross the new footbridge leading over the Thames to Kelmscott. Before crossing the river we stood on the site of a riverside pub, burnt down in the Seventies and never rebuilt. Perhaps this was because the site was too remote to do good business in the late 20th century.

On the other bank it was an easy half-mile walk to Kelmscott Manor. Our first view of the old house was from the riverbank, rising up among the poplars, its Jacobean gables standing sedately above the high wall that encloses the grounds. A pair of sparrowhawks were swooping over fields to the rear. Our route back to The Plough, and our car, lay along the left fork at the end of the lane. First, though, we strolled past the pub, viewing the row of cottages which were built in 1902, in memory of Morris, six years after he died. A carving of their bearded source of inspiration adorns the front.

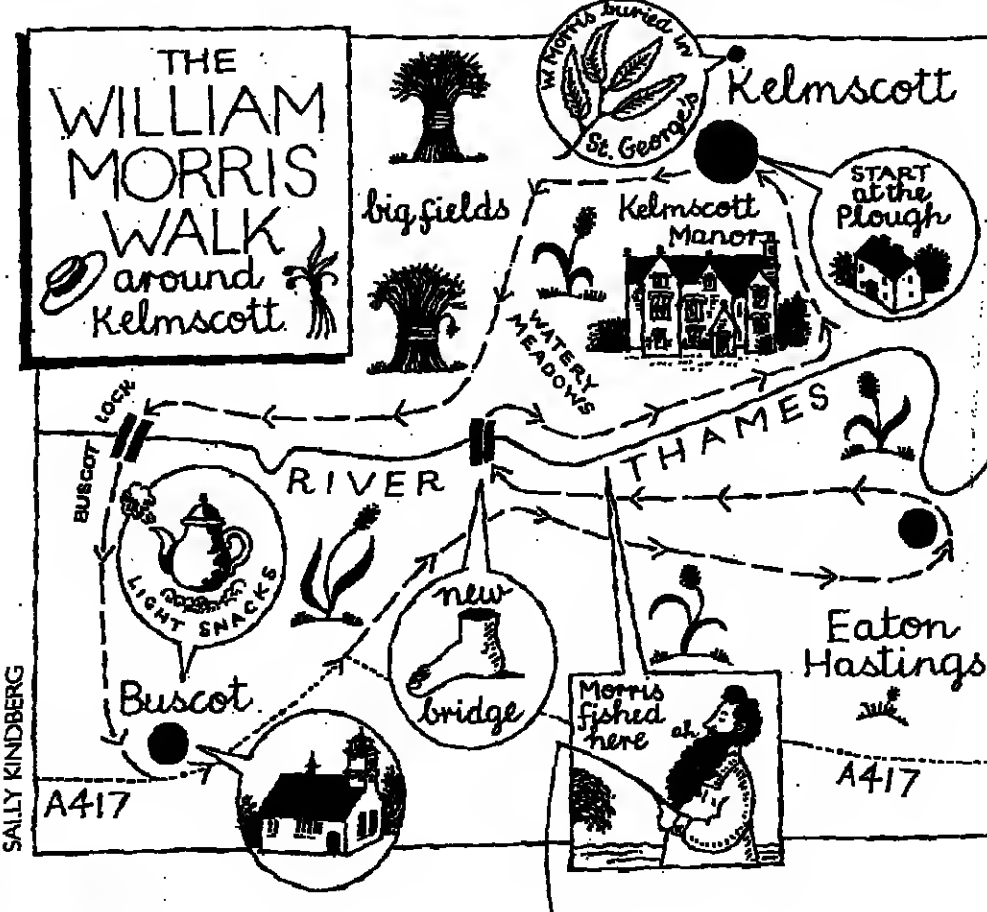
At the end of the road stands the small Norman church of St George. In 1889 Morris, who had founded the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings in 1877, kept a

watchful eye over a restoration of the building. Morris, his wife Jane and two daughters, May and Jenny, are buried beneath a simple, ridge-shaped gravestone supported on low blocks created by his lifelong friend, architect and designer of the Morris cottages, Philip Webb.

Directions
From Kelmscott take back to the north of The Plough Inn. Turn left, following the footpath sign when the track joins a field. Cross a wooden footbridge over the stream. Continue towards the Thames. Do not cross the main footbridge. Instead take the path along the north bank for one mile towards Buscot Lock. Cross river at the lock and take the track up to Buscot. Turn left at the junction with A417 and follow the road for a quarter-mile. When a track leads off left back towards the river, take the field path leading north-east towards Eaton Hastings. Pass over a footbridge across a tributary of the Thames. A yellow arrow to the left marks the path. Follow this path up a small rise.

Take the stile through a hedge and follow the path towards church. From here return via the same track, but this time follow the path on the south bank of the Thames until you reach the big new footbridge across to Kelmscott. Then follow the north bank for half a mile until you reach Kelmscott and the Plough Inn.

Length of walk: about six miles.
Maps: Ordnance Survey Landranger Map 163. Pathfinder sheet 1135 (SU 29/39)



Testaments to its historic past clutter the front entrance like knick-knacks on a mantelpiece



MIKE
ROWBOTTOM
ON
WEMBLEY

Wembley. History. Wembley. History. The words merge into each other.

Those now in charge of the old stadium feel the need to stress the point, styling it "The Venue Of Legends". But even making England's arena sound like the latest challenging bestseller by Erich Von Daniken cannot spoil the sense of place. Naff veneer over oak.

Wembley is not tacky. Wembley, its twin towers greying like long-kept wedding cake pillars, is shabby.

Testaments to its historic past clutter the front entrance like knick-knacks on a mantelpiece. Either side of the black-and-red bossed doors which have swung open for a generation of team coaches stand

marble plinths commemorating the 1948 Olympics.

Craning up at the list of winners last Sunday, I noted the name of Fanny Blankers-Koen, mother-of-two and original housewife superstar, who answered those who said she was too old at 30 to win any medals by taking four on the Wembley track - all gold.

The door itself bore a more transitory memorial left over from last month's match against Moldova - "We'll Do It For You, Diana". Above, the plaque marking the 1966 World Cup finals, with those sweet concluding words, Winners: England.

The 39 steps up which Bobby Moore walked to receive that trophy from the Queen, and the ledge on which he so fastidiously wiped his hands be-

forehand, are gone. Redeveloped into seating.

Thus, for the 180 children and adults offered the chance to experience the stadium at first hand last weekend through a Coca-Cola competition, the promise of "climbing the famous Wembley steps" was misleading. But all the rest was the real thing. Sorry, I mean the ultimate footballing dream. No, I mean, well, you know what I mean.

For the first time in Wembley's history, Portugal were offered the home changing-room before their match. On this occasion, however, the national title was a badge of convenience for a team of 14 and 15-year-olds randomly combined from the list of competition winners.

As "France", their oppo-

nents for the 12 minutes of Wembley action allotted to them, prepared across the corridor, there was a brief opportunity to take in some historical detail.

"Not much, are they?" someone said, looking around. Blue paintwork, plain cream walls. A clock. Call them old-fashioned if you like - Wembley's changing-rooms are the sort of environment in which you could still imagine the Tottenham Double side preparing.

"Everybody can look at the bath and showers," an official announced. Everybody did.

Burgundy tiles you would want to take a mallet to. And a strong smell of toilets. So this was where our England heroes wound down.

"It's nice round the back here," said a lad with ginger hair. But it wasn't, particularly.

As the teams stood beside the pitch awaiting their cue, one of the Football Association coaches who had helped in their preparation shouted out to them. "Come in the tunnel boys. Let's do it properly." Back they filed into the white, caterpillar tent which ushers Gascoigne and Co into the stadium on noisier occasions.

"Go for it, boys," said another coach. "Full out attack. We are at Wembley, probably for the only time in your life."

The main stand was sprinkled with friends and relatives. The MC commenting on the matches was relaxed - "so here come the blues... blues attack-

ing now. Oooh! I thought that was in!". But there was no mistaking the nervousness in the faces of those who waited, bouncing footballs, blowing out air sharply. They were doing it properly.

Celebrations were also observed properly throughout the afternoon. Some teams favoured the mass sprint in a line and dive. For individual goalscorers, shirts tugged madly up over the face were de rigueur - that Fabrizio Ravanelli has a lot to answer for. One scorer did a Ravanelli to reveal a specially prepared T-shirt of Ian Wright. That Ian Wright has a lot to answer for, too, come to think of it.

When Wembley is reduced to its listed towers and rebuilt as the National Stadium - it

could happen any millennium now - the Sunday footballers who got to tread its steeply cambered pitch will retain something precious.

The events which took place will also prove richly rewarding for photographic developers around the country - there were probably more pictures taken than on a big international night.

"Mind my grass, Mum," said one of the Romanian team - under-16 girls - as they left the field, handing over a handful of sacred turf before climbing Wembley's - relatively - famous steps. "Well done, Vicky!" shouted another Mum as the rest of the players filed by.

Wembley. History. Vicky. It was a good mix.

Lara dispute puts West Indies cricket at new low

Brian Lara's entries in the batting record books are in danger of being matched by his catalogue of indiscipline. Now he has had his nomination as the West Indies captain overruled. This is not the best of times for cricket in the Caribbean.

Brian Lara noted something self-evident here the other day. "Anything pertaining to Brian Lara gets into the news, it seems," he said, a reference to the latest of the several controversies that have enveloped him.

It concerns the West Indies Cricket Board's decision to reject its selectors' nomination of Lara as captain for the forthcoming tour of Pakistan and Sharjah. In favour of Courtney Walsh's retention, and his subsequent reported comment that he was disappointed and that it would be written in the record books as "unfortunate".

There was immediate and indignant reaction in Jamaica. Walsh's home island. The matter came to a delicate head in Kingston last weekend, when Walsh, also the Jamaica captain, pointedly sent his vice-captain out to toss with Lara, the Trinidad and Tobago skipper. In their match in the current Red Stripe Bowl tournament.

Walsh claimed he was in the loo at the time but, since he did not attend the pre-match meeting with the referee either, not many bought the explanation. It was widely interpreted as a deliberate and, as far as the crowd was concerned, deserved snub. Lara was heckled and there was delighted satisfaction when he was out first ball.

The team leaves for Pakistan on 26 October for four one-day internationals and three Tests, to be almost immediately followed by the home series against England, and a split be-

tween its respected captain and most experienced member and its best and most dynamic batsman has the potential to undermine morale completely.

The WICB president, Pat Rousseau, has sought to have an urgent meeting between the two, and Lara has moved to smooth things over, saying he had "a very quiet chat with Courtney on the issue and I am sure he is aware of the great respect I have always had for him".

The selectors' choice of Lara reflected general popular opinion outside Jamaica, but it was based more on the appreciation that Walsh, a fast bowler, now 34 and in his 13th year of Test cricket, is near the end of his career and Lara, for all his temperamental instability, is the obvious, if not only, successor.

They must have been tempted to resign en bloc after the Board's rare rebuff, but the

BY TONY
COZIER

chairman, Wes Hall, the tearaway fast bowler of the 1960s, simply commented: "The selectors nominate a captain in the full knowledge that it is the prerogative of the Board to pick that captain or any other captain".

Although Lara has been groomed for leadership since he became Trinidad and Tobago's youngest captain at 20 and led a West Indies A team to Zimbabwe a year later, the Board members are clearly wary of his list of continuing disciplinary lapses that is as long as that of his batting records.

He was fined 10 per cent of his tour fee when he temporarily abandoned the team in England in 1995; he was given a written reprimand that stipulated that any further breach "would attract the strongest

condemnation" after incidents during last year's World Cup when Richie Richardson quit as captain and Andy Roberts was sacked as coach; and he was again fined 10 per cent of his match fee for turning up late prior to the first Test against Sri Lanka last June.

The one alternative to Lara when Walsh does finally call it a day would be Carl Hooper, the enigmatic 30-year-old all-rounder who, after 10 years of underachievement in international cricket, has shown increasing signs of consistency. But his status is also open to question after a report from a tournament official that, in a protest over fees, he refused to play in the Hong Kong Sixes last month, in which he was the appointed captain.

He has denied it and is threatening legal action, but the Board is still awaiting an explanation of why he turned up, did not play, and handed over the captaincy to Philo Wallace.

The inauguration of the Red Stripe Bowl, the regional one-day tournament that has introduced coloured uniforms, white balls, black sightcreens and all the standard razzmatazz of the shortened game to the Caribbean for the first time, might have been enough to deflect such negativity. Instead, it has had troubles of its own.

The stipulation of the sponsors, the brewers of the Jamaican beer, that the semi-finals and final must be played in Jamaica over the five years of its contract has predictably generated a storm of protest from the rest of the Caribbean. In addition, the Board's already shaky reputation for organisational skills was further diminished when one of the opening matches had to be postponed because the team outfits were not delivered on time and another was delayed because someone forgot to bring along the balls.

These have not been encouraging times for West Indies cricket.



The way they were: Brian Lara (right) congratulates Courtney Walsh after his dismissal of England's Alec Stewart during the second Test in Guyana in 1994. Photograph: Graham Morris

The South Atlantic high is in the wrong place



GRANT
DALTON

The skipper of Merit Cup describes how the wind is playing more tricks than usual on the first leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race

After almost two weeks at sea and half-way through leg one, I would have expected a clearer picture to have emerged - who's fast and a threat and must be watched every step of the way, who's off the pace and in need of a miracle or two.

If normal weather patterns had prevailed, we would have had a pretty good idea by now. But first the light, shifting winds and now the south-easterly headwinds have denied us this vital information. Unusual weather is the story of the leg so far. All we have learned since we left Southampton is that you can't trust the weather.

Our navigator, Mike Quiller, still has a touching faith in the weather doing what it's supposed to do, in spite of mounting evidence that it doesn't. Those 20-mile losses in six hours, which we all experienced in the first 10 days had nothing to do with performance or crew, but just about the wind and where you happened to be on the ocean.

It's not helping us to get a handle on the opposition.

Toshiba and Swedish Match, for example, cannot be believed off. Silk Cut is hanging in there, uncomfortably close even though for days there has been 100 miles between them and the front three yachts.

The forecast is for more headwinds for the next few days. We are hoping that they will continue at least until we get to 35 degrees S.

Our current discomfort is brought about by the South Atlantic high. It's in the wrong place! It should be further north and to the east, giving us south-easterlies off the top of it. If it was further north and to the east, we would be reaching across the back of it towards the next mark and then running around the bottom of it to Cape Town. That's what we expected, but it's certainly not what we've got.

Whitbread 60s are not designed for this sort of work. They're built to sail fast off the wind and a beat really hammers both the yacht and the crew. The noise as we crash off the waves in this moderate sea

is tremendous. The movement has to be seen to be believed. It's impossible to move about without clutching on to something. The rigs and sails are under immense strain, so the crew must keep an eye out for danger. In conditions like this, I worry about breaking something big and vital that will affect our chances of winning.

But there's always something to worry about out here. When winds are light and shifting, I worry that someone else is in a better breeze and getting the jump on us.

I have to say that we might have left the wrong boat at home. Most 60s - this boat in particular - are optimised for downwind sailing. We're not slow upwind, but it's certainly not our best point of sailing. I'm sure the other boat, which is wider and more powerful, and a lot faster upwind and reaching, would have been performing better in the sea conditions.

However, we are pleased that we have been able to hang on to Innovation Kvaerner and even make some little

gains since we rounded Fernando de Noronha.

On paper, we should be losing a hit. Kvaerner has an L-shaped keel, which tank tests show is more effective upwind. L-shaped keels tend to be bigger than the T-shaped keel and small rudder, the smallest in the fleet, which produces less drag and therefore higher speed downwind.

We have to trade that off against our performance upwind. We're not surprised - just pleased - that we're hanging on upwind.

We have good speed downwind, but the best all round boat will win the race. You can't be bullet fast in some conditions and embarrassingly slow in others and expect to win the Whitbread.

WHITBREAD ROUND THE WORLD RACE (first leg, 7,350 miles, Southampton to Cape Town) Latest positions: 1 Innovation Kvaerner (Nor) 16hrs 30min 30sec; 2 Merit Cup (Monaco) 17hrs 17min; 3 EF Language (Swiss) 17hrs 22min; 4 Silk Cut (GB) 17hrs 23min; 5 Toshiba (US) 17hrs 24min; 6 Merit Cup (Monaco) 17hrs 25min; 7 American Challenge (US) 17hrs 26min; 8 Swedish Match (Swiss) 17hrs 27min; 9 EF Language (Swiss) 17hrs 28min; 10 Brunel Sunergy (Neth) 17hrs 29min; 11 Bouschotte 17hrs 30min.

SAILING

Sea change for funding will help Olympic assault

In what he described as the highest change ever in the funding of our sport, Rod Carr, racing manager of the Royal Yachting Association, yesterday unveiled a rolling programme of cash support from the national lottery as part of the World Class Performance Plan.

An initial £1.1m will be pumped into the elite squad for both overseas competition and subsistence funding for the competitors in the year to 1 July 1998 with plans already submitted for the following three years. There will also be grants for sports science and medicine.

As sailing will not be included in any inland-based British Academy of Sport, nine existing regional centres will be promoted to sports specific sailing academies, with major funding already announced for Plymouth and Pwllheli.

The funding will be concentrated on Olympic and Youth World Championship classes. The aim, said Carr, will be to turn additional funding into medals. For the sailors there will be a mix of direct cash support.

means tested and based on a national basic £16,000 a year, and equipment cost support. The funding of overseas competition will come out of a basic fund of £800,000.

While the tax position of the athletes is not yet clear, they will sign joint contracts with the Royal Yachting Association and the UK Sports Council, with whom the grant has been negotiated. Carr was keen to emphasise that the funding was expandable, and that other athletes who meet the qualification criteria would be added.

The RYA is expected to play its part in promoting the UKSC, but the athletes will not be obliged to be involved in that programme. Some additional programmes which have yet to receive UKSC approval are expected to be submitted again.

"This is a major improvement to the prospects of British yachting in the long term," said Carr, whose fight through bureaucracy has won high praise. "It is particularly important to those aspiring to Athens in 2004."

— Stuart Alexander

SPORT ON THE INTERNET

Pitch in for stats on the bats

As the baseball season reaches its climax and heads toward the World Series, which starts next Saturday, October 18, I thought it would be interesting to see how the Internet covers America's game.

I know I should like it because of its similarity to cricket and its passion for statistics, but somehow I can't get started. But looking at the annual results, I know cricketers have it easy. A successful baseball team will play more than 170 games in a season lasting seven months from April to October. That even includes playing double-headers, two games on the same day.

Currently the play-offs, to decide which teams contest the World Series, have just started with the American League play-offs between the Baltimore Orioles and the Cleveland Indians and the National League play-offs between the Atlanta Braves, last season's runners-up, and the Florida Marlins.

The Baseball web site (<http://www.fastball.com/>) has all the up-to-date news on the play-offs with links to individual pages for the teams. It also includes sections on statistics with archives going back two years, news, gossip, virtual baseball games and fantasy results. There is also an interesting piece on the average salary, which for the past six years has been over \$1m (£625,000).

The Baseball Server (<http://www.sportsserver.com/SportServer/baseball/>) covers baseball worldwide as well as the expected Major League part. It has a better coverage of the play-offs with action photos plus a page of odds. CBS Sportsline (<http://cbs.sportsline.com/index.html>) has as its main feature a play-by-play breakdown for each day.

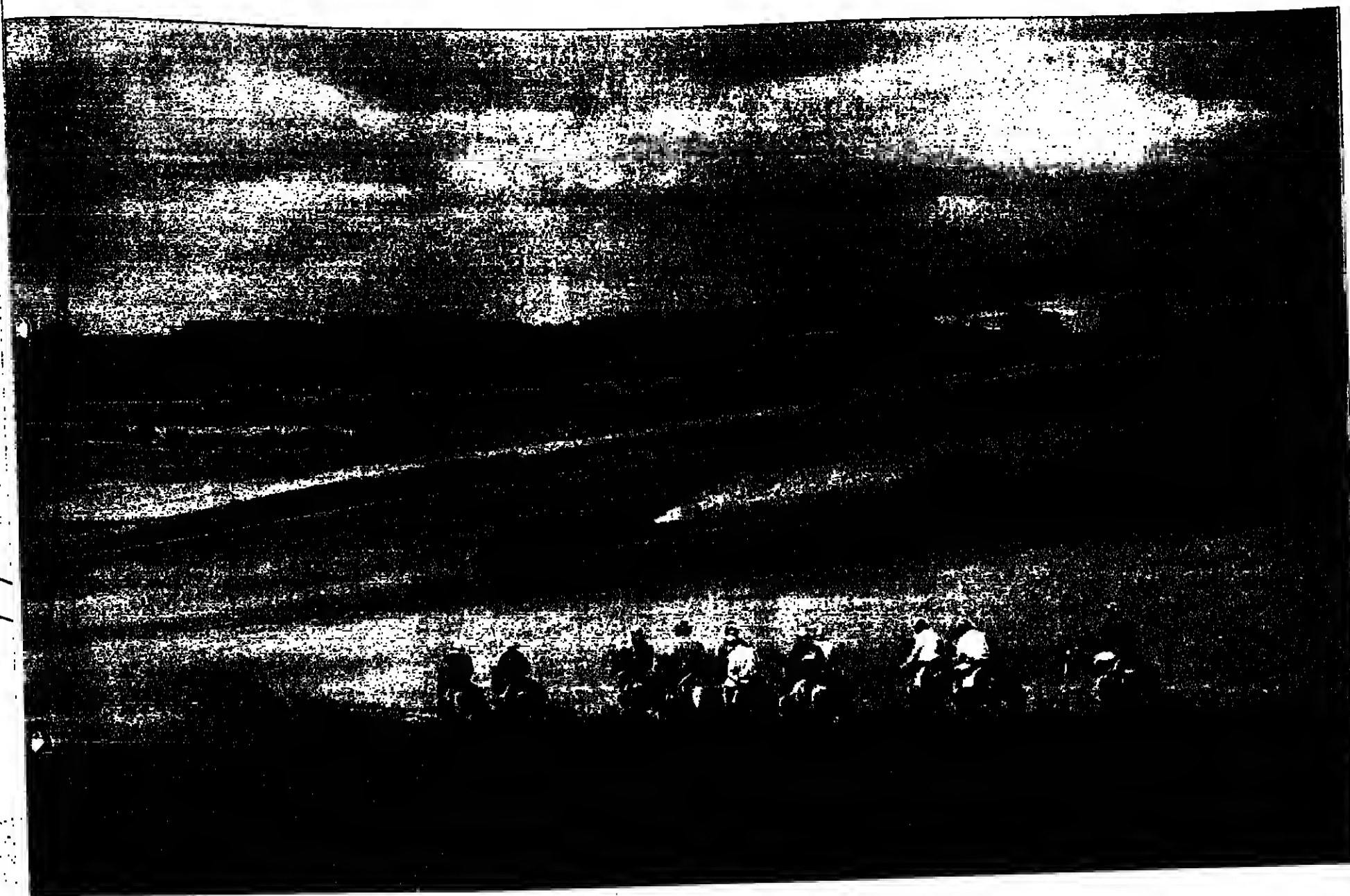
Following the weather connection with last week's piece on the Whitbread, you can also surprisingly link to Hurricane Central (<http://www.storm97.com/>) with latest news on Pauline, Fabian and El Nino.

— Edward Abelson

ADDRESSES

Fastball
<http://www.fastball.com/>
Baseball server
<http://www.sportsserver.com/SportServer/baseball/>
CBS Sportsline
<http://cbs.sportsline.com/index.html>
ESPN Sportszone
<http://espn.sportszone.com/mlb/>
Official Baseball site
<http://www.majorleaguebaseball.com/>
USA Today
<http://www.usatoday.com/sports/mlb.htm>
The Sporting News
<http://www.sportingnews.com/baseball/>
Hurricane Central
<http://www.storm97.com/>

هكذا من الأصل



Above: Frankie Dettori dismounts in trademark fashion from Starborough after winning the St James's Palace Stakes at Royal Ascot

Left: A string of horses trained by Barry Hills enjoy the open air near Lambourn in June

Hallam's sporting vision wins double IOC accolade

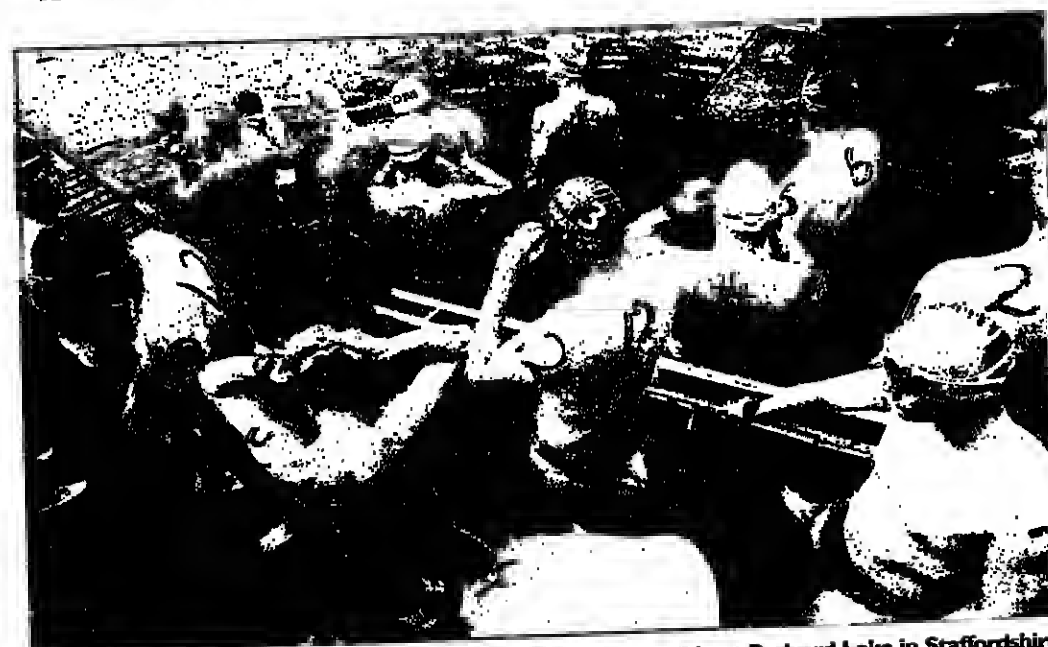


The Independent's Robert Hallam has continued the paper's tradition of prize-winning sports photography by winning two awards in the ninth International Olympic Committee Best of Sport Photographic contest. Hallam, 36, a previous winner of the British Sports Photographer of the Year competition, was awarded the Silver Lens for second place in the colour category for his photograph of Frankie Dettori dismounting at Royal Ascot (top right). The eight photographs on this page make up his colour portfolio, for which he was highly commended.

There were entries from 26 countries for the com-

petition, which was not limited to Olympic sports in order to encourage exposure of "less covered sports". To qualify, the photographs had to be taken between 1 September 1996 and 10 August 1997. Hallam, the only British award winner, won the prize for the best black and white portfolio in 1995.

The winners of the main categories this year were: Colour photograph: Shimoda Yuichi (Nikkan Sports News); colour portfolio: Tim Clayto (Sydney Morning Herald); black and white photograph: Trent Parke (The Australian); black and white portfolio: Trent Parke.



Awaiting the start of the Open Water Swimming Championship at Rudyard Lake in Staffordshire



Le's David Rees holds off the challenge of Richmond's Jim Iton to score a try in their rugby union Pilkington Cup tie



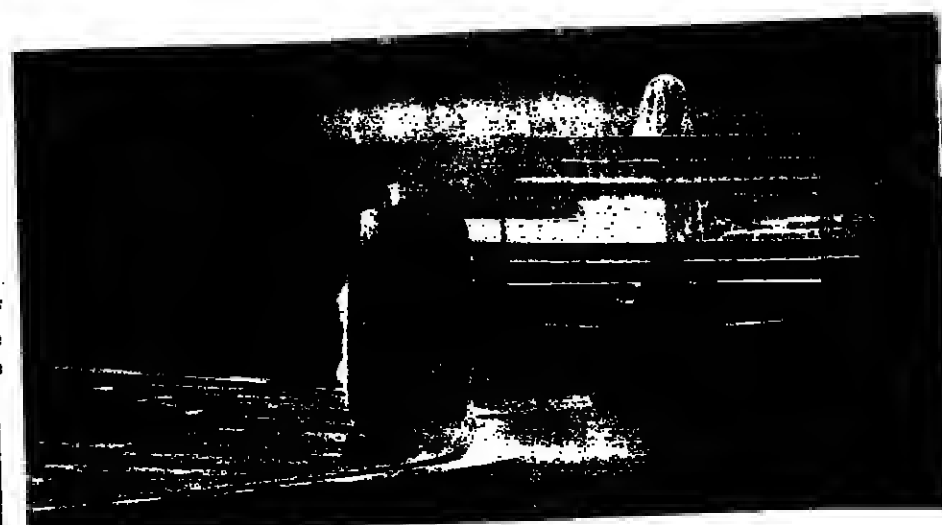
Coome Hill, one of the favourites for the 1997 Cheltenham Gold Cup, works out on the beach at Bude in Cornwall, near the yard of his trainer, Walter Dennis



A wicket falls in Surrey's County Championship match against Yorkshire at The Oval in June

A blown engine ends the challenge of Ferrari's Michael Schumacher in the British Grand Prix at Silverstone

To order a print of one of these photographs telephone 0171 293 2534 (subject to availability)



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Romantic, caring, African lady, mid-30s, loves cooking, wine, dancing, children, seeks caring male, 35-45, for long-term relationship. 222730

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Intelligent, well-read, East Indian female, 5, Trinidad origin, great cook, seeks kind, caring, romantic, white male, 45-50, for friendship. 222731

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Intelligent, well-read, East Indian female, 5, Trinidad origin, great cook, seeks kind, caring, romantic, white male, 45-50, for friendship. 222731

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LANCASHIRE LASS

Young-at-heart, attractive lady, outgoing personality, 55, 5'7", blonde/blue, likes gardening, pets, travel, walking, holidays, driving out, seeks tallish male, similar age/interests, for friendship/relationship. 222556

EXETER LADY
Romantic, genuine, trustworthy, considerate female, likes to be outdoors, enjoys music, theatre, cinema, arts, dining out, casual/active, seeks single/active/male, 20+, to share life and love. Loves music/dance/poetry and takes the road less travelled. 222559

2 BECOME 1
Intelligent, kind-hearted, loving female, seeks romantic, Christian male, 20+, to share life and love. Loves music/dance/poetry and takes the road less travelled. 222559

LARGE & LOVELY
Pretty, independent, intelligent, spiritual, Manchester female, 36, long blonde hair, right, for relationship. 222533

LOVELY LADY
Lovely, outgoing female, 25, GSOH, seeks adventurous, kind-spirited male, for companionship, friendship, maybe more. London/outsiders. 222556

INTO ANTIQUES & MUSIC
...home life, eating, good conversation, walking & travel, attractive, friendly lady, hoping to meet lovely, down-to-earth, interesting man, 40-50, maybe single club, for company, possible relationship. SE London. 222514

FUN-LOVING FUTURE
Youthful, slim, attractive, professional female, late 20s, blonde, intelligent, intelligent male, for good conversation, laughter, travel and hopefully long-term relationship. 222520

HAVE GAZE, WANT KINGS!
Slim, presentable, lively, bright, South Wales female, seeks tall, intelligent, mature male, for a long-term relationship, for a long-term relationship. 222510

LOVE AND LAUGHTER
Slim, attractive, intelligent, Canterbury female, 51, seeks one special man, to be at least, a very dear friend. 222557

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They say it happens when you least expect it. Or should I say where you least expect it. Who'd have thought placing a personal ad would lead to something like this. I was looking to meet a few nice people. But then there was Chris. Wow! Funny, cute, and so sweet. Now we're not talking romance here. Well, not just yet...!!

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WARM & AFFECTIONATE
Attractive female, 30s, seeks tall male, 35-45, with GSOH, to share walks, cinema, friendship and fun. London area. 222141

ATTRACTIVE SPARKLER
Outgoing, professional female, 5'3", enjoys keeping fit, dining out, theatre, music and socialising, seeks successful, attractive male, late 40s-50, NS, with GSOH, Edinburgh area. 222309

LIBRA LADY
Curvy but slender, enthusiastic, accomplished, Jewish, opinionated, London, Jewish woman, seeks astrologically compatible, divorced Jewish man, 50-60, for long-term committed relationship. 222319

STYLISH & FUN
Attractive, stylish, brunette female, 43, NS, no less, VGSOH, seeks attractive, professional male, 35-49, no less, for a long-term relationship. 222322

PRESENTABLE & PROFESSIONAL
Warm-hearted, petite, divorced mum, seeks educated gentleman 40-50, for possible romance. Humour most important than looks. London area. 222304

SEEKING MY SPECIAL MAN
Attractive, slim, blonde female, 40, seeks intelligent, attractive, slim, successful male, 50ish, who is adventurous, romantic and most importantly sincere. North London area. 222301

A WOMAN FOR KEEPS
Attractive, feminine, slim, adventurous, professional, Indian lady, Kuala Lumpur origin, divorced with 2 children, varied interests, wicked GSOH, seeks Australian or continental partner for life. London/outsiders. 222306

HELLLO!
Independent, intelligent female, 30s, seeks similar female, 25-35, to add something extra special, to her life. North Yorkshire area. 222314

Men Seeking Women

LET'S START AS FRIENDS
Relaxed, NS, Israeli/English/Palestinian male, 62, seeks kind female, late 30s, for friendship, maybe more. London area. 222711

MR LOVERMAN
Caring, easygoing male, 30s, enjoys most things in life, seeks mature female, for love and companionship. 222739

OUTDOOR INTERESTS
Slim, professional male, 33, enjoys rock climbing, hill walking, seeks female, similar interests, Manchester or NW area. 222768

ORIENTAL FEMALE
Fit, caring, energetic female, 34, 5'10", seeks Oriental/Asian, fit, slim and pretty female, for friendship and romance. 222744

LIFE IN THE BUS LANE
West Yorkshire male, 34, likes theatre, cinema, walking, glass, seeks female passenger, for fun times. 222741

NON-GRUMPY MALE
Non-grumpy male, 34, 6'1", enjoys walking, countryside, conservation, swimming, rugby, seeks tallish, attractive female, 23-30, for friendship/relationship. East Midlands. 222735

ALTERNATIVE L'AMOUR
Kind, easygoing, attractive, professional, fit, Indian male, 38, 6'1", enjoys laughing, yoga, alternative therapy, theatre, travel, seeks similar female, 25-40, for friendship/relationship. London/SE area. 222734

LOOKING FOR LOVE
Caring, honest, attractive, male, 30s, 6'1", likes cinema, comedy, sport, concerts, seeks female, 20-45, for good times together. 222731

CROSS COUNTRY CHARMS
Friendly, honest, warm, caring, intelligent male, 30s, 6'1", enjoys country driving, seeks kind female, 25-35, for friendship/relationship. 222728

LOOK NO FURTHER
Easygoing, attractive, professional male, 40, 6'1", slim build, enjoys cycling, photography, landscaping, seeks attractive female, 25-35, for friendship/relationship. 222735

RELATIONSHIP ANY?
Easygoing male, 37, enjoys conversation, eating, drinking, hill walking, riding, seeks female, to share above things. 222740

YOUNG ARAB MALE
Tall, slim, 25, 5'11", seeks NS, fun-loving female, for friendship/relationship. London area. 222507

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UPTOWN MAN
Professional, educated, Christian male, 40, part-time DJ, slim, youthful, energetic, passionate, enjoys music, walking, cycling, swimming, seeks female companion, to share life and interests. 222720

Opera Lover
Male, 40, seeks lady companion, Lincoln area or London. 222721

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IN HARTFORD SHIRE
Caring male, 41, NS, seeks pleasant/female, 35-45, in need of TLC who share life together. 222501

SCINTILLATING
Warm, witty, enthusiastic, Christian businessman, 43, seeks like-minded female, for life and beyond, Midlands area. 222742

EXPERIENCED PARTNER
Handsome, professional, single man, 40ish, enjoys travel, life, seeks female, 35-45, for exciting, lasting relationship. Black Asian woman welcome. London/Southern England area. 222712

ARE YOU LONESOME?
Bubbly, outgoing male, 46, 5'3", brown hair, smoker, likes travelling, cooking, socialising, 80/70s music, seeks similar female, 30-40, for friendship, possible relationship. Basingstoke area. 222715

BACK TO BASICS
Attractive male, young 40s, 5'8", slim build, enjoys alternative therapies, spiritual life, cycling, countryside, seeks slim female, 35-44, NS, for long-term relationship. London area. 222718

YOU'RE THE ONE I WANT
Kind, considerate male, looking for a special lady to enjoy good times again, likes sports, cinema, sailing out, various types of music, especially rock, for fun times. London area. 222733

MALE NURSE
Slim, fit, caring graduate, young 40s, 6'1", seeks happy, warm professional female, 25-35, for friendship. West Suffolk Cambs area. 222714

RECYCLED & REDONTO
Recycled leather, 49, seeks female, 35+, for friendship, maybe more. 222702

AFRICAN L'AMOUR
Quiet male, 50, 5'8", enjoys cinema, sport, parties, seeks tall, attractive lady, 25-35, who is a good partner, for friendship/relationship. Central London. 222781

MODERN RELATIONSHIP
Handsome, athletic, intellectual male, 51, NS, UK, seeks model relationship, with creative, energetic, young lady. 222732

ARE YOU ALONE?
Me too! I'm a deal, NS, affectionate, caring, honest, supportive, black female, 35, but looks 25, from Nottingham, GSOH, seeks white/black male, 35-45, 25-40, must be full of romance. 222734

LOOKING FOR LOVE
Caring, honest, attractive, male, 30s, 6'1", likes cinema, comedy, sport, concerts, seeks female, 20-45, for good times together. 222731

CROSS COUNTRY CHARMS
Friendly, honest, warm, caring, intelligent male, 30s, 6'1", enjoys country driving, seeks kind female, 25-35, for friendship/relationship. 222728

LOOK NO FURTHER
Easygoing, attractive, professional male, 40, 6'1", slim build, enjoys cycling, photography, landscaping, seeks attractive female, 25-35, for friendship/relationship. 222735

RELATIONSHIP ANY?
Easygoing male, 37, enjoys conversation, eating, drinking, hill walking, riding, seeks female, to share above things. 222740

YOUNG ARAB MALE
Tall, slim, 25, 5'11", seeks NS, fun-loving female, for friendship/relationship. London area. 222507

JUST FRIENDS

THE WORLD ON A BUDGET
Bright, outgoing, stylish, loyal female, 18, seeks male, 18-25, who is a good partner, for friendship/relationship. 222784

WINTER SOL
Bright, outgoing, stylish, loyal female, 18, seeks male, 18-25, who is a good partner, for friendship/relationship. 222784

NEW FRIENDS WANTED
Outgoing, friendly

SPORT
ON TV

Cut to the present day, and presenter Mark Urban reminded us that "Italy have won seven of the last 11 encounters. Perhaps it's just as well they never took up cricket too." Another 3-2 win for England tonight would be worth a few more bloody noses.

open of Harrogate £430 (31. Ingham).

POWELL CONFERENCE Pool A: Le Hall's vs Brierley (230). Pool B: Manchester vs Newhall (235). Sale vs Macclesfield. Pool C: Richmond vs Brierley (235). Pool D: Parkgate vs Glossop (235). Pool E: Edinburgh vs Perthshire (235). Pool F: St. Barnabas vs Northampton (235).

FOCKLEY

CRICKET **LEAGUE** Premier: Bedford Tigers, Stevenage, Alveston Community Centre (235). Division 1: 1. 235. 2. 235. 3. 235. 4. 235. 5. 235. 6. 235. 7. 235. 8. 235. 9. 235. 10. 235. 11. 235. 12. 235. 13. 235. 14. 235. 15. 235. 16. 235. 17. 235. 18. 235. 19. 235. 20. 235. 21. 235. 22. 235. 23. 235. 24. 235. 25. 235. 26. 235. 27. 235. 28. 235. 29. 235. 30. 235. 31. 235. 32. 235. 33. 235. 34. 235. 35. 235. 36. 235. 37. 235. 38. 235. 39. 235. 40. 235. 41. 235. 42. 235. 43. 235. 44. 235. 45. 235. 46. 235. 47. 235. 48. 235. 49. 235. 50. 235. 51. 235. 52. 235. 53. 235. 54. 235. 55. 235. 56. 235. 57. 235. 58. 235. 59. 235. 60. 235. 61. 235. 62. 235. 63. 235. 64. 235. 65. 235. 66. 235. 67. 235. 68. 235. 69. 235. 70. 235. 71. 235. 72. 235. 73. 235. 74. 235. 75. 235. 76. 235. 77. 235. 78. 235. 79. 235. 80. 235. 81. 235. 82. 235. 83. 235. 84. 235. 85. 235. 86. 235. 87. 235. 88. 235. 89. 235. 90. 235. 91. 235. 92. 235. 93. 235. 94. 235. 95. 235. 96. 235. 97. 235. 98. 235. 99. 235. 100. 235. 101. 235. 102. 235. 103. 235. 104. 235. 105. 235. 106. 235. 107. 235. 108. 235. 109. 235. 110. 235. 111. 235. 112. 235. 113. 235. 114. 235. 115. 235. 116. 235. 117. 235. 118. 235. 119. 235. 120. 235. 121. 235. 122. 235. 123. 235. 124. 235. 125. 235. 126. 235. 127. 235. 128. 235. 129. 235. 130. 235. 131. 235. 132. 235. 133. 235. 134. 235. 135. 235. 136. 235. 137. 235. 138. 235. 139. 235. 140. 235. 141. 235. 142. 235. 143. 235. 144. 235. 145. 235. 146. 235. 147. 235. 148. 235. 149. 235. 150. 235. 151. 235. 152. 235. 153. 235. 154. 235. 155. 235. 156. 235. 157. 235. 158. 235. 159. 235. 160. 235. 161. 235. 162. 235. 163. 235. 164. 235. 165. 235. 166. 235. 167. 235. 168. 235. 169. 235. 170. 235. 171. 235. 172. 235. 173. 235. 174. 235. 175. 235. 176. 235. 177. 235. 178. 235. 179. 235. 180. 235. 181. 235. 182. 235. 183. 235. 184. 235. 185. 235. 186. 235. 187. 235. 188. 235. 189. 235. 190. 235. 191. 235. 192. 235. 193. 235. 194. 235. 195. 235. 196. 235. 197. 235. 198. 235. 199. 235. 200. 235. 201. 235. 202. 235. 203. 235. 204. 235. 205. 235. 206. 235. 207. 235. 208. 235. 209. 235. 210. 235. 211. 235. 212. 235. 213. 235. 214. 235. 215. 235. 216. 235. 217. 235. 218. 235. 219. 235. 220. 235. 221. 235. 222. 235. 223. 235. 224. 235. 225. 235. 226. 235. 227. 235. 228. 235. 229. 235. 230. 235. 231. 235. 232. 235. 233. 235. 234. 235. 235. 236. 235. 237. 235. 238. 235. 239. 235. 240. 235. 241. 235. 242. 235. 243. 235. 244. 235. 245. 235. 246. 235. 247. 235. 248. 235. 249. 235. 250. 235. 251. 235. 252. 235. 253. 235. 254. 235. 255. 235. 256. 235. 257. 235. 258. 235. 259. 235. 260. 235. 261. 235. 262. 235. 263. 235. 264. 235. 265. 235. 266. 235. 267. 235. 268. 235. 269. 235. 270. 235. 271. 235. 272. 235. 273. 235. 274. 235. 275. 235. 276. 235. 277. 235. 278. 235. 279. 235. 280. 235. 281. 235. 282. 235. 283. 235. 284. 235. 285. 235. 286. 235. 287. 235. 288. 235. 289. 235. 290. 235. 291. 235. 292. 235. 293. 235. 294. 235. 295. 235. 296. 235. 297. 235. 298. 235. 299. 235. 300. 235. 301. 235. 302. 235. 303. 235. 304. 235. 305. 235. 306. 235. 307. 235. 308. 235. 309. 235. 310. 235. 311. 235. 312. 235. 313. 235. 314. 235. 315. 235. 316. 235. 317. 235. 318. 235. 319. 235. 320. 235. 321. 235. 322. 235. 323. 235. 324. 235. 325. 235. 326. 235. 327. 235. 328. 235. 329. 235. 330. 235. 331. 235. 332. 235. 333. 235. 334. 235. 335. 235. 336. 235. 337. 235. 338. 235. 339. 235. 340. 235. 341. 235. 342. 235. 343. 235. 344. 235. 345. 235. 346. 235. 347. 235. 348. 235. 349. 235. 350. 235. 351. 235. 352. 235. 353. 235. 354. 235. 355. 235. 356. 235. 357. 235. 358. 235. 359. 235. 360. 235. 361. 235. 362. 235. 363. 235. 364. 235. 365. 235. 366. 235. 367. 235. 368. 235. 369. 235. 370. 235. 371. 235. 372. 235. 373. 235. 374. 235. 375. 235. 376. 235. 377. 235. 378. 235. 379. 235. 380. 235. 381. 235. 382. 235. 383. 235. 384. 235. 385. 235. 386. 235. 387. 235. 388. 235. 389. 235. 390. 235. 391. 235. 392. 235. 393. 235. 394. 235. 395. 235. 396. 235. 397. 235. 398. 235. 399. 235. 400. 235. 401. 235. 402. 235. 403. 235. 404.

Lady can bring Johnston's Dreams to earth

Land Of Dreams was a brilliant winner at Doncaster last month but she may have to give way to another outstanding filly, Lady Alexander, in this afternoon's Cornwallis Stakes at Ascot, writes Richard Edmondson.

Mark Johnston was 38 yesterday but he had little to cheer. The Middleham trainer caught the morning flight from Dublin to Newcastle following a rather unsatisfactory session at the Goffs Yearling Sales. "I went to buy 15 like I had done the previous year but I only got six," he said. "The breeders, pinhookers and sales people were happier than I was because the horses were so expensive."

If Johnston is to revive his spirits it may be that he has to get back on a plane to a foreign auction hall, however. It was while the trainer was at the Keeneland September Yearling Sales in Kentucky that an animal from Kingsley House put up one of the most eye-catching displays of the season at Doncaster's St Leger meeting.

The Flying Childers Stakes witnessed the sort of acceleration from Land Of Dreams that you would more readily associate from a mechanical vehicle in the Nevada desert. "Her win that day wasn't a surprise for us though the manner of her victory certainly was," Johnston said. "She was wonderful and it would be nice if we saw a repeat in the Cornwallis."

What may be most wonderful at Ascot this afternoon though is the mood of the

bookmakers. The idea that it only rains on the Crown Estate when the monarch is away in more agreeable climes has gained much credence this week. In a cultural exchange, we have given Pakistan The Queen

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Tedburrow (Ascot 3.35)
NB: Lady Alexander (Ascot 2.30)

and they have responded with the donation of a monsoon.

The effect of the soft going in Berkshire on two-year-olds is indeterminate this afternoon, but it is punters who will be left with the brief of guessing. The ground will be a trial for most of the horses because the vast majority will not have raced on it before," Johnston said.

"We've got no reason to believe ours won't like soft ground be-

cause she's very strong, like most sprinters I suppose."

Land Of Dreams, in spite of her afterburner, is by no means certain to confirm Town Moor placings with Tippitt Boy on these revised terms. Others to consider are Lord Kintyre, who was second to the unbeaten Daggies Drawn in the Richmond Stakes at Goodwood, and Lady Alexander, the only horse to have beaten King Of Kings. While the latter's Curragh form might not be copper-bottomed, the third, Princely Heir, another Johnston horse, did go on to win a Group One contest, Lady Alexander (next best 2.30) may just beat Land Of Dreams in a fillies' forecast.

Kingsley House is also represented in an opener which is short on runners but out on intrigue. Their Equity Princess and another contestant, Rabah, cannot be ignored with any

great confidence, though it may be that the finish will be between the other two runners. Dr Fong was relatively unfancied on his Newbury debut despite his forwarding address being at Warren Place and this \$425,000 colt will not attract such generous odds today. The winner though could be Evening World (2.00), who has at least won in the soft and was third in Newbury's annual parade of future champions, the Haynes, Hanson and Clark Stakes. The runner-up, Quiet Assurance, has since won at Newmarket.

The day's second Group Three race, the Princess Royal Stakes, is populated largely by underachievers. In this crowd of giggling girls the safest option looks to be Graceful Lass (3.00), judged on her narrow defeat by Pace over course and distance two weeks ago.

The final televised race from Ascot, however, will be fought out by a bunch of old sweat shorts on top-class ability but with their attitude unquestioned. In such company there is no stouter named runner than the course-and-distance winner TEDBURROW (nap 3.35).

At Longchamp tomorrow, one of Michael Tabor's glittering equine fleet, Second Empire, gets a run out in the Grand Critérium. It is the belief of some, including the bookmakers, who have Second Empire toward the summit of both 2,000 Guineas and Derby betting, that the colt is best juvenile at Aidan O'Brien's Ballydoyle stable. This is not the hierarchy constructed by those at the yard itself, though, who send Second Empire carrying a pot of tea and toast to King Of Kings' lodgings every morning.

D is for ...



GREG WOOD
THE A-Z
OF BETTING

Dettoni, Landfranco: Italian jockey who deserves to be remembered as one of the last great social reformers of the 20th Century, since he did more for the cause of wealth redistribution in the space of one afternoon at Ascot last year than Bevan managed in his entire lifetime. The only current rider that most Britons have heard of, and one who, as the Irish would say, was not hiding behind the door when personality was handed out. He is not the champion jockey, nor is he likely to be when the season ends in a few weeks' time, but that doesn't really matter, since 90 per cent of the population thinks he is, and will do for the next 20 years, even if he retires tomorrow.

Dogs: These come in two varieties: the racing dog, which plies its trade at 'Ackney and the Stow, and the useless old dog, which is, somewhat confusingly, always a horse. Greyhounds were status symbols to the ancient Egyptians, their ownership restricted by law to the ruling élite, but their real worth became clear only about 2,500 years later when it was discovered that they are daft enough to chase an unconvincing dud hare, week in, week out, without ever getting frustrated or bored. Individual dogs are astonishingly consistent - put one around four bends every morning for a week and its time will never vary by more than a few hundredths of a second. This, of course, is useless for gambling purposes, so tracks insist on sending six off at once with a sharp left turn about 50 metres away from the traps. An industry is founded on the interference which often results.

Draught: And also for the first leg which does win, and the second, which doesn't.

Dreams: Rare is the punter who has not at one time or another had a vivid dream in which a big race is apparently played out in advance. Nor is this a modern phenomenon. In 1871, Lord Poulett, who owned The Lamb, one of the leading steeplechasers of his day, had two of them in the same night, both featuring the Grand National. "In the first, he was last," Poulett wrote the next day to the jockey, Tommy Pickernell. "In the second, he won by four lengths and you rode him." Pickernell was duly booked to ride The Lamb at Aintree, while his owner set about staking on the horse everything in his stately home that was not nailed down. A

couple of months later, The Lamb won the National at 5-1, which some might say is conclusive proof that supernatural forces were at work. Cynics, on the other hand, will point out that the winning margin was just two lengths. For what it's worth, your columnist is prepared to share a premonition which has not yet come to pass. When a bright green horse with seveo legs and the Queen booked to ride lines up for the Derby - get on.

Jumpers in the picture as York falls to the weather

National Hunt enthusiasts and those who mourn the long-departed quick-fire style of the TV Seven will have a pleasant surprise today when Channel 4 televises seven races from Bangor and Worcester instead of the abandoned meeting at York.

After the Knavesmire yesterday failed to recover from the soaking it received earlier in the week, which also caused the abandonment of Thursday's card, Channel 4 moved quickly to switch coverage to the two jump meetings.

Meanwhile York's clerk of the course, John Smith, apologised following the abandonment of the fixture - earlier there had been encouraging oases from the track about prospects of racing going ahead.

"We had good drying weather overnight but there are patches of false ground," Smith said. "In the interests of safety, we couldn't take the risk. It's very disappointing and I can only apologise to the racing public."

Eddery out of hospital

Pat Eddery left hospital yesterday after undergoing an operation on his back. The problems forced Eddery to bring his season to a premature close five days after notching his 4,000th career win aboard Silver Patriarch in the St Leger.

Eddery's agent, Terry Ellis, said: "Pat is really pleased with the way things have gone. The numbness has disappeared from his legs."

Second fire at stables of Luca Cumaní, page 7
William Hill sold, page 24

Swing's high gives way to the Singspiel era

Celtic Swing was hailed as a wonder horse when he annihilated Singspiel at Ascot three years ago today. But although defeated then, Singspiel's durability has sealed his place in history.

There was little room for argument after Celtic Swing sauntered away with the Hyperion Stakes at Ascot exactly three years ago today. All but the most cynical spectators were convinced: they had just seen a horse of outstanding talent and promise, a colt who would surely go on to compile one of the most successful careers in British turf history.

And so they had, only the animal in question was not the

one carrying the claret and blue silks of Peter Savill. The horse who finished runner-up to Celtic Swing that afternoon was eight lengths adrift, so far behind the winner that few gave him a second look. He was a two-year-old trained by Michael Stoute, whose future appeared to hold, at best, a chance in a decent handicap, or perhaps a minor Group race in Italy. His name: Singspiel.

BY GREG WOOD

It is a form book entry which tells us a great deal more than the bare fact that the 1994 Hyperion Stakes, which

does not carry even Listed status, was one of the best juvenile races of its year. Leaf through a decade of records and you will not find a better example of the capricious streak which makes this sport at once both irresistible and infuriating. It is distilled in a list of six runners in a £10,000 event. This is Essence of Racing.

Within weeks of the Hyperion Stakes, Celtic Swing had won the Racing Post Trophy by 12 lengths and was quoted at just 12-1 to become the first horse since Nijinsky to complete the Triple Crown. The final leg, the St Leger, might be a little close to the Arc, but hey, he could always win the Arc at four. As a hundredweight of expectation was loaded on to Celtic Swing's young shoulders, Singspiel slipped quietly into his winter quarters. The Timeform annual rated him joint 34th in his generation, 30th behind the colt who had beaten him at Ascot.

Who then could have imagined how their respective careers would unfold. Three years on, Celtic Swing is in Australia, taking a working holiday at the Collingrove Stud while he waits for the new British covering season to begin. He ran his last race just nine months after the Hyperion, finishing unplaced in the Irish Derby, while his pursuit of the Triple Crown went no further than the 2,000 Guineas, in which he was narrowly beaten by Pennekamp. A leg injury ensured that he had no chance to recapture his juvenile form as a four-year-old.

Singspiel, though, is still earning his money the hard way, and now. No horse in British turf history has won even half as much as the £3,660,622 which Singspiel has accumulated to date (Pilsudski, his stable-mate, is the second-highest earner, with a mere £1,698,523). He has won four Group One races, including the Japan Cup, Coronation Cup and International Stakes, not to mention the Dubai World Cup, which has no Pattern status but is as close as you can get to a racing world championship.

He will run at the Breeders' Cup next month (the Turf, in



Level broke Celtic Swing (left) and Singspiel leave the stalls together for the Hyperion Stakes of 1994 but their careers took different paths. Photograph: Trevor Jones

which he finished second last year, is favoured over the Classic on dirt), while a final farewell to British punters in the Champion Stakes next Saturday is also being considered. No matter what inflation does to prize-money levels, his earnings record seems sure to stand for years to come.

"Before the Hyperion, we thought he was a nice horse," Anthony Stroud, Sheikh's Mohammed's racing manager, recalls. "He had ability and we thought he would get better with

age, but the reputation of Celtic Swing was awesome and I think that we really saw a superb horse that day. He absolutely thrashed Singspiel, he skated in."

"Even at the end of Singspiel's three-year-old career, you wouldn't say he was a great horse, he kept finishing second. He's just a very tough thoroughbred with great determination and courage and a wonderful constitution. He loves racing, he's been superbly trained and it's a testament to keeping a horse in

training at five. He's come a long way since Ascot, and that's the wonderful thing about racing, you never know what's around the corner."

For the connections of Celtic Swing, though, there is nothing but the thought of what might have been. "It was a great performance at Ascot," Nick Bahington, Peter Savill's racing manager, says. "It was just a shame about his injury. A lot of people have said that Singspiel improved a lot after that and he probably did, but I know that Michael Stoute rated him very highly that day. But he stayed a sound and fit horse and unfortunately Celtic Swing had his leg problems."

For punters, the lessons of the 1994 Hyperion Stakes are clear. Never take anything for granted, particularly when it comes to ante-post betting. And no matter what wins the race this afternoon, or by how far, make a very careful note of whatever finishes second.

CELTIC SWING V SINGSPIEL - CAREER GUIDES

CELTIC SWING
Born: 21 February 1992
Brown colt by Danerout of Celtic Ring
Race record: 11/1218
5 wins from 7 races
Prize-money won: £405,254

Date	Age	Place	Track	Stakes	Time	Weight	Prize
19 July 92	1st	1st	Ascot	7f Maiden Auction Stakes	1:22.88	11.5	£2,888
3 Oct 92	1st	1st	Ascot	7f Hyperion Stakes	1:23.74	11.5	£3,773
22 Oct 92	1st	1st	Doncaster	1m Rising Post Trophy	1:23.73	11.5	£3,773

Date	Age	Place	Track	Stakes	Time	Weight	Prize
22 April 93	1st	1st	Newbury	7f Greenham Stakes	1:21.40	11.5	£2,888
6 May 93	2nd	2nd	Newmarket	1m 2000 Guineas	1:20.00	11.5	£2,888
3 June 93	1st	1st	Doncaster	1m 4f Prix du Jockey-Club	1:20.00	11.5	£2,888
2 July 93	2nd	2nd	Doncaster	1m 4f Irish Derby	1:20.00	11.5	£2,888

SINGSPIEL
Born: 25 February 1992
Bay colt by In The Wings out of Glorious Song
Race record: 512/242221/122121-1141
9 wins from 20 races
Prize-money won: £3,660,622

Date	Age	Place	Track	Stakes	Time	Weight	Prize
5 Sep 92	5th	5th	Leicester	7f David Price Maiden Stakes	1:26.73	11.5	£1,797
21 Sep 92	1st	1st	Ascot	7f Hyperion Stakes	1:23.74	11.5	£3,773
29 April 93	2nd	2nd	Sandown	1m 2f Classic Trial	1:22.72	11.5	£2,888
9 May 93	2nd	2nd	Cheltenham	1m 4f Chester Vase	1:22.72	11.5	£2,888
25 June 93	2nd	2nd	Longchamp	1m 2f Grand Prix de Paris	1:22.72	11.5	£2,888
28 Sep 93	1st	1st	Doncaster	1m 4f Ebor Stakes	1:22.72	11.5	£2,888
15 August 93	2nd	2nd	York	1m 4f Great Voltigeur Stakes	1:22.72	11.5	£2,888
5 Sep 93	1st	1st	Doncaster	1m 4f Irish Derby	1:20.00	11.5	£2,888

Date	Age	Place	Track	Stakes	Time	Weight	Prize
27 April 94	1st	1st	Sandown	1m 2f Gordon Richards Stakes	1:20.00	11.5	£2,888
6 June 94	2nd	2nd	Epom	1m 4f Coronation Cup	1:20.00	11.5	£2,888
9 July 94	1st	1st	Newmarket	1m 4f Princess of Wales Stakes	1:20.00	11.5	£2,888
14 Sep 94	1st	1st	Goodwood	1m 2f Select Stakes	1:20.00	11.5	£2,888
28 Sep 94	1st	1st	Woodbine	1m 4f Canadian International	1:20.00	11.5	£2,888
28 Oct 94	1st	1st	Woodbine	1m 4f Breeders' Cup Turf	1:20.00	11.5	£2,888
28 Nov 94	1st	1st	Fuchu	1m 4f Japan Cup	1:20.00	11.5	£2,888

Date	Age	Place	Track	Stakes	Time	Weight	Prize
3 April 95	1st	1st	Nad Al Sheba	1m 2f Dubai World Cup	1:20.00	11.5	£1,698,523
6 June 95	1st	1st	Epom	1m 4f Coronation Cup	1:20.00	11.5	£2,888
25 July 95	4th	4th	Ascot	1m 4f King George VI & Queen Elizabeth Stks	1:20.00	11.5	£2,888
18 Aug 95	1st	1st	York	1m 4f International Stakes	1:20.00	11.5	£2,888

HEXHAM

2.20 Pebble Beach 2.50 Epontine 3.20 White-gates 3.55 Jamaican Flight 4.25 Tigher.

Budget 4.55 Ballindoo

GOING: Good (Good to Firm in places).

Left-hand, undulating course. Run-in of 250yd.

Course is on minor road 2m S of Hexham. Signposted from town.

Hexham station 2m. ADMISSION: Club £3, Ladies £2 (OAPs).

BAR: Public bar.

LEADING TRAINERS: G Richards 15-55 (281%), G M Moore 15-52 (271%), J H Johnston 14-82 (271%), P Mottershead 9-41 (22%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: A Dobbin 24-50 (267%), P Niven 19-55 (216%), R Guest 11-75 (147%), R Gurney 10-55 (154%).

FAVOURITES: 149-588 (58%).

UNRACED FIRST TIME: La Perdona (2.50).

2.20 CAPITAL SHOPPING CENTRES NOVICE CHASE (CLASS E) £4,200 added 3m 11

GOING: Good (Good to Firm in places).

Left-hand, undulating course. Run-in of 250yd.

Course is on minor road 2m S of Hexham. Signposted from town.

Hexham station 2m. ADMISSION: Club £3, Ladies £2 (OAPs).

BAR: Public bar.

LEADING TRAINERS: G Richards 15-55 (281%), G M Moore 15-52 (271%), J H Johnston 14-82 (271%), P Mottershead 9-41 (22%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: A Dobbin 24-50 (267%), P Niven 19-55 (216%), R Guest 11-75 (147%), R Gurney 10-55 (154%).

FAVOURITES: 149-588 (58%).

UNRACED FIRST TIME: La Perdona (2.50).

3.20 REGIONAL RAILWAYS NOVICE HCPC CHASE (CLASS F) £3,600 added 2m 110yds

GOING: Good (Good to Firm in places).

Left-hand, undulating course. Run-in of 250yd.

Course is on minor road 2m S of Hexham. Signposted from town.

Hexham station 2m. ADMISSION: Club £3, Ladies £2 (OAPs).

BAR: Public bar.

LEADING TRAINERS: G Richards 15-55 (281%), G M Moore 15-52 (271%), J H Johnston 14-82 (271%), P Mottershead 9-41 (22%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: A Dobbin 24-50 (267%), P Niven 19-55 (216%), R Guest 11-75 (147%), R Gurney 10-55 (154%).

FAVOURITES: 149-588 (58%).

UNRACED FIRST TIME: La Perdona (2.50).

2.50 METRO CENTRE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 3yo 2m

GOING: Good (Good to Firm in places).

Left-hand, undulating course. Run-in of 250yd.

Course is on minor road 2m S of Hexham. Signposted from town.

Hexham station 2m. ADMISSION: Club £3, Ladies £2 (OAPs).

BAR: Public bar.

LEADING TRAINERS: G Richards 15-55 (281%), G M Moore 15-52 (271%), J H Johnston 14-82 (271%), P Mottershead 9-41 (22%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: A Dobbin 24-50 (267%), P Niven 19-55 (216%), R Guest 11-75 (147%), R Gurney 10-55 (154%).

FAVOURITES: 149-588 (58%).

UNRACED FIRST TIME: La Perdona (2.50).

4.25 IN SITU HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS E) £4,200 added 2m 110yds

GOING: Good (Good to Firm in places).

Left-hand, undulating course. Run-in of 250yd.

Course is on minor road 2m S of Hexham. Signposted from town.

Hexham station 2m. ADMISSION: Club £3, Ladies £2 (OAPs).

BAR: Public bar.

LEADING TRAINERS: G Richards 15-55 (281%), G M Moore 15-52 (271%), J H Johnston 14-82 (271%), P Mottershead 9-41 (22%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: A Dobbin 24-50 (267%), P Niven 19-55 (216%), R Guest 11-75 (147%), R Gurney 10-55 (154%).

FAVOURITES: 149-588 (58%).

UNRACED FIRST TIME: La Perdona (2.50).

4.55 METRO CENTRE HANDICAP HURDLE (CLASS F) £2,800 added 3m

GOING: Good (Good to Firm in places).

Left-hand, undulating course. Run-in of 250yd.

Course is on minor road 2m S of Hexham. Signposted from town.

Hexham station 2m. ADMISSION: Club £3, Ladies £2 (OAPs).

BAR: Public bar.

LEADING TRAINERS: G Richards 15-55 (281%), G M Moore 15-52 (271%), J H Johnston 14-82 (271%), P Mottershead 9-41 (22%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: A Dobbin 24-50 (267%), P Niven 19-55 (216%), R Guest 11-75 (147%), R Gurney 10-55 (154%).

FAVOURITES: 149-588 (58%).

UNRACED FIRST TIME: La Perdona (2.50).

5.10 LITTLE MISS ROCKY (D) 1st

GOING: Good (Good to Firm in places).

Left-hand, undulating course. Run-in of 250yd.

Course is on minor road 2m S of Hexham. Signposted from town.

Hexham station 2m. ADMISSION: Club £3, Ladies £2 (OAPs).

BAR: Public bar.

YOUR VOTE COUNTS
make sure you use it!

Hall of Famers

MY VOTES

Name _____ Country _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Your _____

Address _____

Post Code _____

Tel: _____

It wasn't Sir Hiram who spent half-a-million lire in Rome's Hot Hands Massage Club



THE GAFFER TAPES

Bon jorno from Roma where the Eternal city is already enjoying the lurid sights and beery sounds of Englishmen abroad.

But that's enough of events at the press hotel. I'm here, with the chairman, to help England's World Cup campaign and assess some potential signings. Both prospects look good to me though Sir Hiram Fenn may need some persuading when it comes to personal terms for the Italians I've lined up. One of them wants to stay at Buckingham Palace while he goes house-hunting and the other is de-

manding we sign the chef from his favourite restaurant to be his cook.

I had hoped to get Demetrio Albertini and Paolo Maldini after Milan's poor start to the season, but they refused to budge for anyone except Ruud. It was a blow at first but, to be honest, I think they're vastly overrated. I'm sure the lads I've sorted out, Cusi Fan Tutti and Dolce Vita, will be a sensation when we unveil them at the Old Cornfield.

They'll need to be as the chairman's not happy with me. It's not the football, we gained our first win last week and are

now only five points adrift. As I told him, I'm now the leading contender for the October manager of the month award.

The problem is over an incident on our first night in Rome and it could have repercussions for a while. We'd gone out for a meal and, unfortunately, picked up one another's credit cards by mistake after paying the bill. Had we gone to bed straight after it wouldn't have been a problem but I told him I'd like to go for a stroll by the Tiber first.

Next morning at breakfast I had to tell him I had some good news and some bad news.

The good news was I had his credit card, the bad news was I'd used it. The money I spent isn't a problem, he'll dock it off my wages, the difficulty surrounds where I spent it. Apparently Mrs Fenn deals with the bills and now Sir Hiram's going to have to explain that it wasn't him that ran up a bill of a half-a-million lire in the Hot Hands Massage Club.

Of course, we didn't let a little thing like that distract us from helping the cause. We've both been heavily involved with England's preparation and I can tell you Glenn's left nothing to chance. Having put out and col-

lected all the cones myself and looked after the practice balls I can tell you we will have a full complement for the pre-match warm-up. Sir Hiram has made sure the lads won't lack for that vital half-time lift either by bringing out plenty of tea-bags. He even went to the effort of having some PG Tips sent out after Glenn told him Tony Adams and Paul Merson don't drink Tetley's anymore.

It's been instructive watching Glenn's training sessions. He's very much a player's manager. Every time someone misses a tackle, makes a bad pass or shoots wide he stops the

play and calls everyone into a circle. He then holds a discussion group aimed at helping the unfortunate player to accept his mistake and come to terms with it. For really bad cases, like when Gazza was nutmegged by David Batthy, he sits the player down and counsels him on a one-to-one basis.

It's all come a long way from the days when the worst trainer had to wear a pair of the tea lady's knickers outside their trousers in the pub afterwards. Meanwhile, there's been good news from home with Ego Massive recuperating well from the operation on the horrible

internal injuries he suffered last week. I'd told him that celebratory jump over the corner flag was not a good idea.

Ivor Niggie's also getting better after cutting his hand opening a supermarket, but Shaun Frone has pulled another muscle climbing off the treatment table.

Have to go as Glenn and I are off to the Vatican for a quick good-luck prayer. I know we beat Poland but I'm sure the Pope won't hold that against us. As they don't say in Roma, Forcipes Ingly Terra.

Barry Gaffer was talking to Glenn Moore

You've never been a proper manager until you've been sacked

Judging by the events of the past fortnight you could use the old joke about London buses to describe managers getting the sack: there hadn't been one for ages, but now several have come along at once.

Just when it seemed conceivable that chairmen had decided to invest that precious commodity called faith in their managers, in the space of 13 days Micky Adams, Brian Horton and Jan Molby went the way of Kerry Dixon and Mervyn Day and joined this season's sack race.

Of course, Adams is already back in management, filling Molby's sizeable hot seat at Swansea City before it had time to grow cold. So, early October, and the managerial merry-go-round is already in full swing.

But it is encouraging to remember that by this time last year twice as many managers had been handed their P45s, and they included some big fish, namely Bruce Rioch at Arsenal and Howard Wilkinson at Leeds.

So far this season, the Premiership managerial roll call remains intact, although some managers appear to be on decidedly shaky ground. Most bookies are no longer taking bets on the odds-on favourite for the chop, but the fact that Ladbrokes are quoting Spurs at 250-1 for the Premiership tells its own story. There is a certain former Spurs manager up at Hillsborough who must be looking over his shoulder, too.

Of course, should Gerry Francis decide (or Alan Sugar decide for him) that tending his pigeons is preferable to trying to salvage Spurs' season, the fans' choice as his successor would not be available, as he is gainfully employed elsewhere managing England.

Most managers accept that being sacked is part of the job. Wilkinson maintains that "there are only two kinds of managers: those who've been sacked, and those who will be sacked", while Brian Horton, who was booted out of Huddersfield on Monday, claims that "you've never really been a manager until you've been sacked". By that token Horton is well and truly a manager, having previously been given a golden handshake by Manchester City.

Some, like Horton, are further ahead in the sack race than most. The message on Barry Fry's answerphone after he had been fired by Birmingham in 1996 said: "Kirstine's out, and I'm down the Joh Centre as usual looking for employment."

Being the ebullient character he is, Fry always seems to bounce back. Others - like Danny Bergara, who got an exceedingly raw deal when he was sacked by Stockport in 1995 - find it harder to recover from an event that caps what is already a highly stressful job.



OLIVIA BLAIR ON THE PROSPECTS FOR LIFE AFTER FOOTBALL

Even Alex Ferguson admitted that if he had known 10 years ago what the Manchester United job entailed, he would not have taken it.

Yet managers have nothing to help them deal with the stresses of a job which John Barnwell, chief executive of the League Managers' Association, claims is "no longer sustainable in its current form: as all things to all people".

With this in mind the LMA, the Football Association and the Professional Footballers' Association, with input from the academics at Loughborough University, are proposing a

number of courses aimed at preparing managers for modern management more thoroughly by teaching them time and people management, and - crucially - PR skills. The idea, says Barnwell, is to "redefine the manager's role so that, among other things, he stays in the job longer and has a better lifestyle."

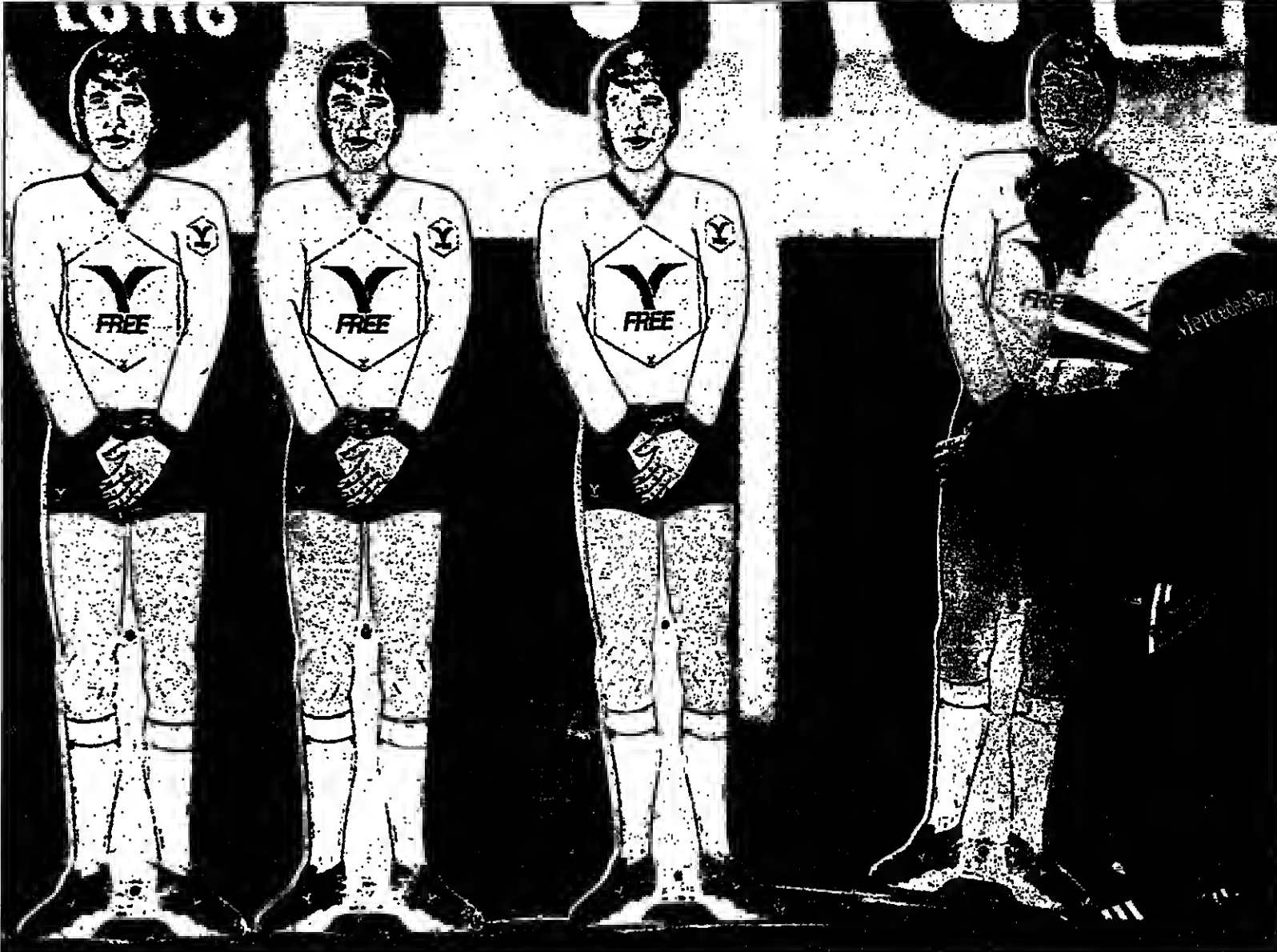
Of course, football being the insular profession it is, there are limited options open to those who are out of work, permanently or otherwise. Few try their hand at anything other than improving their golf handicaps, fishing, selling insurance, running sports shops or pubs, writing revealing (or not-so-revealing) autobiographies or even, in George Graham's case, tending their roses.

And while there is quite a cottage industry developing among managers who become overnight experts in punditry, few are likely to branch out quite as bravely as Bergara is planning to do.

The Uruguayan describes himself as having "fallen out of love with football" after his Stockport débacle, so he is taking a major step sideways and hoping to set up shop as a freelance photojournalist after completing a course in November. However, his subject will - of course - be football. "It's what I know," he says, "and I can ask leading questions because I have the leading answers; after all, I've been in the game 40 years."

Bergara's example is a unique one. The LMA more usually helps jobless managers find something "to keep the rust off", as Barnwell puts it. Most tend to end up in associated roles as chief scouts or youth development officers, which Keith Burkinshaw - who to all intents and purposes jumped before he was pushed out at Spurs in 1984 and is now director of football at Aberdeen - politely describes as "pottering about in something less pressurised".

Which is surely what Graeme Souness is now doing at Torino. Sacked - sorry, moved sideways - after four months as manager, Souness has apparently taken up the role of, er, strategic adviser to the Serie B club. Your guess is as good as mine.



Berti Vogts, Germany's coach, fines up some dummies prior to free-kick practice during training in Hanover this week. After the injuries that have afflicted his squad, Vogts might have to field some of them against Albania tonight...

Germany need just a draw against the Albanians, Group Nine's bottom team, to win the section and qualify for France. The European champions will be without Jürgen Klinsmann, Matthias Sammer, Ulf Kirsten, Lars Ricken, Christian Wörns, Jens

Nowotny, Sven Knetsch and maybe Jörg Heinrich, so Vogts' side may well be experimental. "We need just one point but, despite all our injury problems, I expect a clear victory," he said yesterday. "Anything less would not satisfy me."

Albania's coach, Astrit Hafizi, said: "It will be a very difficult match but we will do our best. We have gone through a time full of difficulties and problems which I hope will never happen again," he added in reference to the recent turmoil in his country.

Witch doctors brandish the knives, skulls and crucifixes

Chile v Peru

The fourth and final South American place at next year's World Cup finals could be decided tomorrow. If Peru win in Chile, the Peruvians will confirm their ticket for France and eliminate the Chileans from contention.

Peru are fourth in the standings, behind Argentina, Colombia and Paraguay, who have all already qualified, and three points above Chile.

The build-up to tomorrow's game in Santiago has been bizarre, to say the least. Little love has been lost between the two Pacific nations since Chile annexed two nitrate-rich Peruvian provinces after a four-year war late in the last century. Animosity still exists, and has been magnified by this match.

In Lima, the Peruvian cap-

ital, witch doctors have been doing their best to help their team's cause. Dancing, chanting and brandishing a hizarre collection of knives, skulls and crucifixes, they cast a series of spells on Thursday intended to guarantee victory for Peru.

The so-called "Shaman of the Andes", Juan Osco, led six fellow medicine men in rituals intended to surround the Peruvian players with positive energy and bring bad fortune down on their rivals. "Long live Peru," shouted the cloaked witch-doctors as they spat alcohol over team photos, raised deer's feet to ensure swift-footedness and held the claws of a condor bird to guarantee fighting spirit.

"Let them have cramp! Let them remain blind night and day," they also chanted, stab-



AROUND THE WORLD BY RUPERT METCALF

bing knives at a Chilean team shirt hung upside down during the ceremony in a Lima square. Back in Santiago, the Chilean coach was not slow to use some provocative words. "Our country is more educated than

yours," Nelson Acosta told Peruvian journalists.

The Chilean president, Eduardo Frei, has tried to play peacemaker. "This is a football match, it is a sport and it does not make sense to treat it as guerrilla warfare between two brother nations. We have to keep a sense of proportion," he pleaded - probably in vain.

Paraguay

The Paraguayans have already qualified for France, and their goalkeeper, José Luis Chilavert, looks certain to be one of the characters of the tournament.

Famous for scoring goals from penalties and free-kicks, he was banned for four World Cup qualifiers this year after punching Colombia's Faustino Asprilla. Last year he got a three-month suspended jail

sentence for hitting a stadium steward while playing for his Argentinian club, Velez Sarsfield. Now he has made his mark in the political arena.

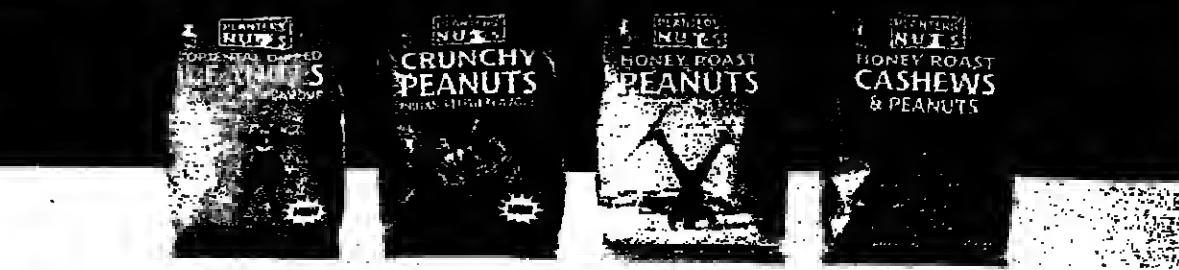
Chilavert was approached at a Buenos Aires hotel last month by Lino Oviedo, a former general and now a Paraguayan presidential candidate. Oviedo wanted to pay his respects - and doubtless secure a valuable photo opportunity.

"I told him I couldn't embrace him," Chilavert said, "because I think he put Paraguayan democracy in danger. When Oviedo's aides heard what I said they started to insult me. Then they tried to attack me and I defended myself."

The ensuing brawl made headlines in Argentina and Paraguay - but probably not the sort that Oviedo wanted.



TRY NEW PLANTERS AND SAY GOODBYE TO ALL OTHER NUTS.



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SIDELINES

Valiant old heroes
of the Potteries

An old rivalry will be played out in a new setting when Stoke City meet Port Vale in the Britannia Stadium tomorrow – but will the Pottery's famous president be so sad if the derby honours finish even?



Sir Stanley Matthews, who had two legendary spells with Stoke, makes no secret of his early devotion to their rivals. After retiring at 50, Sir Stan managed Vale and reprised his wing wizardry for them in friendly.

Over 100 players have appeared for both clubs. When Billy Rowley, later England's goalkeeper, moved from Vale to Stoke 101 years ago, the neighbours' court-room wrangle over his contract set the tone for relations.

Several Stoke stalwarts have managed Vale: Jackie Mudie, Alan Bloor and Freddie Steele, who led them to the FA Cup semi-finals in 1954. Mark Chamberlain represented England soon after leaving the Valiants for the Victoria Ground aged 20 in 1982, whereas Vale's ex-Stoke men, like Jimmy Greenhoff, Alan Dodd and Eric Skeels, have tended to be at the veteran stage.

Yet two Burnley heroes, Roy Sproson and Robbie Earle, were snapped up as teenagers on being spurned by Stoke. Meanwhile, Mike Pojic will coach the home side tomorrow – the former Stoke full-back won damages for unfair dismissal by Vale. In terms of footballing compatibility, it often seems the opposite ends of the Six Towns remain worlds apart.

Ten things
that Paul
Gascoigne
might be
missing
in Glasgow
today

- 1 The art, music, theatre, dance and literature that made Glasgow the European City of Culture 1990.
- 2 Graceful architecture by Charles Rennie Mackintosh. The coliseum's hardly subtle, is it?
- 3 Cleopatra's. Not an exhibition about Caesar's mistress, but a Glasgow West End nightclub which is popular with student courses.
- 4 Barras market. Not quite Armani, Versace and Gucci, but plenty of hot fashions dirt cheap.
- 5 Political efficiency –

the Italian government makes Glasgow City Council look organised. 6 The renowned Nardini family, purveyors of the finest ice-cream. (Not to mention Daniela Nardini, *This Life's* Anna).

7 Touching gestures – Eternal City romance has oozing to match a Glasgow kiss.

8 Neeps, tatties, fish suppers, Scotch pies and briedies – just like mamma used to make.

9 I'm Bru.

10 Marvelling at the colourful but impenetrable language.

NAME OF THE GAME
No 4: LEYTON ORIENT

Few clubs have had as many name changes as the Os who, since their formation in 1881, have been called Glyn Cricket and Football Club, Eagle FC, Clapton Orient, Orient and Leyton Orient. The "Orient" part of the name dates back to 1888, when many of the players worked for the Orient Shipping Line. The club is thought to have been formed by members of Homerton Theological College who wanted to play cricket – when their first cricket season finished they stayed together in the winter to play football.

THIS WEEK

On 13 October 1965, Scotland met Poland at Hampden Park in a crucial qualifying match for the 1966 World Cup finals. The Scots – including Billy Bremner, Denis Law and their youngest international debutant, the 18-year-old Willie Johnston, took the lead after 14 minutes. The Poles, however, scored twice in the last five minutes.

"Stunned into silence, sickened by defeat, 107,000 Scots suddenly poured boos down on to their beateo team from the towering terraces," read the next day's paper. The unexpected defeat effectively left them unable to qualify. Their last two matches, a win and a loss against Italy, confirmed this.

THIS WEEK'S TRANSFERS

TRANSFERS: Chris Madden (midfielder) Arsenal to Brighton; Brian Barrow (defender) Coventry to Swindon; David Rocastle (midfielder) Chelsea to Hull City; Paul Simpson (midfielder) Doncaster to Exeter; Steve Finney (forward) Stoke to Exeter; Steve Finney (forward) Swindon to Cambridge Utd; Gary Swainston (defender) Leicester to Reading; A. Darnley (defender) Reading to Leicester; P. Hodgson (midfielder) Reading to Leicester; Arnold Hill (midfielder) Portsmouth to Ipswich; Lee Richardson (defender) Ipswich to Reading; Lee Richardson (defender) Ipswich to Reading; Lee Richardson (defender) Ipswich to Reading.

CONTRIBUTORS: Phil Shaw, Nick Harris, Paul Newman. Readers' contributions welcome. Send to: Sidelines, Sports Desk, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. E-mail: sport@independent.co.uk

Simpson joins Molineux men

Wolverhampton Wanderers have signed the Derby County winger Paul Simpson on loan – and the Molineux manager, Mark McGhee, is hoping to secure a permanent deal.

Simpson, 31, who is valued at around £75,000, will go straight into the squad for tomorrow's West Midlands derby with Birmingham City at St Andrews.

The former Manchester City and Oxford United player has been out of the first-team picture at Pride Park this season, but has impressed McGhee in the reserves.

"They don't want a lot of money for him and what I said to the boy is that I don't want him here if all he is going to do is clutter up the place by not being to the team," the Wolves manager said. "But, if he comes and proves he can make a contribution this season, then he can stay and he is up for the challenge. He wants to play first-team football."

The Welsh international defender Adrian Williams has returned to Molineux after being pulled out of the World Cup qualifier with Belgium because of an Achilles injury.

The Bolton manager Colio

Todd has denied reports that the midfielder, Jamie Pollock, has asked to go on the transfer list. "The situation is that Jamie has been doing a job for the team and has been asked to play out of position," Todd said. "I have been playing him wide on the right, whereas his favourite position is in central midfield, where I have not been able to accommodate him so far."

The player is disappointed and unhappy, but we've talked it through and I've agreed that, if an offer comes along that is right for the club and the player, then we will listen to it."

Pollock, 23, a former England Under-21 international, joined Bolton for £1m just under a year ago from the Spanish outfit Osasuna, after first making his name with Middlesbrough.

The Manchester City manager Frank Clarke is facing a selection crisis after hearing that Uwe Rösler has been ruled out of action for six weeks. Clarke may be forced to buy a replacement for the German forward, who damaged ankle ligaments in a friendly with an Italian select XI this week.

The transfer-listed Rösler will not be available again

until late November, which will also put an end to his chance of a move to Everton.

Rösler's lay-off leaves City short of bodies. There are fears for Paul Dickow, who went to hospital for a scan on his knee yesterday after picking up an injury in the same game.

Dickow could need a minor operation, and that would leave City with just their record signing Lee Bradbury in attack as they try to escape the bottom half of the First Division.

The West Bromwich Albion striker Paul Peschisolidi has rejected an improved contract with the Hawthorns club. He had said earlier in the week that he was "very close" to signing a two-year extension to his current deal, which has 18 months to run. Then talks broke down, with the Canadian international and Albion unable to reach agreement. The 26-year-old insisted: "I won't be signing a new deal."

Peschisolidi, who dropped his agent Eric Hall from the talks after he was involved in a row with Albion's chief executive, John Wile, said: "I met with chairman Tony Hale but we could not reach agreement."

— Rupert Metcalf



Peschisolidi: rejected new contract Photograph: Empics

Young Scots humbled by 10-man Latvia

Sirhan Buckland
reports from Livingston
Scotland Under-212
Latvia Under-214

It was a tale of two keepers, with Queso of the South's 19-year-old David Mathieson enduring a painful afternoon, sharing at least some blame for each of Latvia's four goals.

Michael Craig, the oceph of Scotland's coach, Tommy, was the victim of Kolinko's moment of madness which reduced the visitors to 10 men when leading 2-0. Craig Jr was forced off injured in the incident and, as it occurred in the area, the referee, Milan Mitrovic, awarded a penalty, which

was converted by Dundee's Iain Anderson after 32 minutes. Theo Craig's replacement, David Graham of Rangers, levelled the score after 44 minutes with a close-range effort.

That cancelled out a Latvian lead gained with early strikes by Nikolai Polakov after nine minutes and Igor Slesarehuk after 21 minutes – each aided by some uncertain keeping from Mathieson.

However, while Scotland were able to exploit their extra man initially, further lapses in

concentration from Mathieson led to second-half goals from Erik Pelcis after 54 minutes and Vsevolod Lidak, three minutes later, which secured victory for the Latvians.

Neither side were in contention for the knock-out stages of the Under-21 Championship. This defeat was the Scots' seventh defeat of a dismal campaign, which has seen only seven points gained from 10 matches.

"It is a learning process for these lads," Craig Sr said. "I

think they now recognise that mistakes get punished at this level, as we were against a strong physical side today."

SCOTLAND UNDER-21: Mathieson (Queen of the South); McEwan (Falkirk); May (Falkirk); McChesney (St Johnstone); Horn (Falkirk); Craig (Aberdeen); Buchan (Aberdeen); Bradbury (Manchester Utd); Thompson (Dundee Utd); Ferguson (Preston); Anderson (Dundee); Substitutes: Graham (Preston); Craig, Sr; R. Anderson (Aberdeen); McEwan, Sr; Young (Aberdeen); Forster, 67.

LATVIA UNDER-21: Kolinko (Skonto Riga); Zile (Metallurg Riga); Pumpis (Dinamo Riga); Rakovs (Metallurg Riga); Lidak (Daugava Riga); Mitroshchuk (Daugava Riga); Polakov (Metallurg Riga); Mathieson (Queen of the South); Viskus (Lithuania); Slesarehuk (Shornog Riga); Rodas (Queen Mary's); Substitutes: Dzagolov (Metallurg Riga); Pelcis (Skonto Riga); Gaudier (Metallurg Riga); Forster, 67. Referee: M. Mitrovic (Slovenia).

George Farm's message would probably have
been: 'Get lost, don't bother me again'

I play football at every opportunity nowadays, so it is difficult to recall a time in my life when I would rather watch than play, but for a time in my teens that was indeed the case. I played for the school team on Saturday mornings and would rather go to Bloomfield Road to watch Blackpool in the afternoon than turn out again for Blackpool Boys Club with sopping wet boots.

I had been watching the Pool since I was seven, round about the time they won the FA Cup in the famous "Matthews Final" of 1953. Sadly, I did not see their moment of triumph. Watching the match on television at a friend's house, we decided it was a lost cause at 3-1 down to Bolton and went out to play on our bikes oblivious to the great comeback culminating in Bill Perry's last-minute winner.

However, I was a regular three years later when Blackpool finished second in the League to Manchester United. I used to spend hours waiting for autographs outside the ground. Day after day in the school holidays the players would sign a different photograph in my scrapbook.

The most elusive players were the great Stan Matthews and the Scottish goalkeeper George Farm. I am sure Stan had a secret exit from Bloomfield Road, because I only ever caught him once or twice. He proved as difficult for autograph hunters as he was for the hapless full-backs who had to mark him for 90 minutes.

George Farm was not quite so elusive, in fact, but he spent hours on his pedicure after training and was a terrible grouch when he eventually appeared at the players' entrance, glowering at the two or three kids still there while their lunch was going cold on tinned tins.

"Didn't I give it to you yesterday?" he would growl, as I tentatively showed an action picture under his nose. Then he pulled out his own fountain

FAN'S
EYE
VIEWNo 227
BLACKPOOL

BY
GRAHAM
KELLY

peo to carefully inscribe "Geo" Farm.

You had to be particularly careful about which photograph to select for his autograph. It would have been a very reckless child who asked Farm to sign anything from the 1953 Cup final, when he let in a couple of soft goals.

My favourite signature of all – apart, that is, from the greats such as Pele, Di Stefano and Puskas obtained in exuberantly embarrassing fashion in much later years – was an unlikely one. Eddie Clamp, the Wolves and England wing-half, prefixed his name "Yours in sport". I thought this was really cool. Much better than having to beg, like some kids: "Please put best wishes."

I often wondered what George "Geo" Farm would have written if anyone ever dared ask for a special message. Probably "Get lost, don't bother me again."

George Farm was a perfectionist, always immaculately turned out, who was capped 10 times by Scotland despite employing a highly unusual technique to catch the ball, a nutcracker-type style with one hand above and one hand below the ball.

He once injured a shoulder in those pre-substitute

days and moved to striker to head a goal in a 6-2 win over hated local rivals Preston North End. I was sitting on the wall behind the goal. Happy days.

I followed Blackpool for many years. I thrilled at the electric skill of Tony Green before his career was prematurely ended by injury after his move to Newcastle.

Alan Buddick came the other way in 1966 – a beautiful player, but one for whom the word enigmatic was surely specially coined. I often ask Jim Armfield about him now, but Jim, who has always taken his game seriously, tends to clam up, distrustful I suspect of anyone who did not make the most of the sublime gifts he had been blessed with.

Barrie Martin, a full-back of upright style, played a costly and ill-judged passback on one occasion from just outside the penalty area near the players' tunnel. Dear old Ellis Tomlinson, our football master at school, termed that corner of the pitch "Martin's Folly".

I still watch Blackpool whenever duties allow. But since my move away from Lancashire to the Football Association nearly 10 years ago, I have never seen them win.

The season before last I stayed away after a hard-won draw at Peterborough in March. Pool were top in April, then dipped to finish third.

A first leg play-off semi-final at Bradford City was won 2-0. Promotion to Division One looked certain.

For the second leg at Bloomfield Road I followed Gary Lineker's famous advice about Wimbledon and "watched" the match on Television. Agonisingly 0-1 became 0-2. Nothing in life was surer than that 0-2 would flick over to 0-3 in the closing minutes.

It did, and big Sam Allardyce lost his job.

Graham Kelly is chief executive of the Football Association

Swindon closing in
on Forest at the top

Today's top First Division game sees Bury, promoted in May, travelling to third-placed Swindon. The Wilts side can go within one point of Nottingham Forest at the top if they win.

Bury's fellow divisional newcomers, Stockport and Crewe (both currently just above mid-table Bury) both play lower opposition, at home to Oxford United and away at Reading respectively.

Tomorrow is First Division derby day, with Birmingham hosting Wolverhampton Wanderers and Stoke City facing Port Vale in the Potteries encounter at the Victoria Ground.

In the Second Division, Northampton can go top of the table if they win away at Grimsby. The Cobblers, promoted in May, have lost just one League game this season, on the opening day. Elsewhere, Fulham

will be looking to maintain their 100 per cent record at Craven Cottage in the Keegan era when they meet Blackpool. Fulham beat Oldham 3-1 last Saturday while Blackpool lost 2-1 to Millwall.

Oldham and Millwall themselves meet today at the New Den, with Oldham knowing they can leapfrog their opponents into the top six if they win, and Millwall knowing they can maintain their promotion challenge if they prevail themselves.

In the Third Division, Micky Adams makes a quick managerial comeback after leaving Fulham as he takes charge of struggling Swansea City, who sacked Jan Molby in midweek. Adams faces a difficult first game in charge, taking Swansea, fifth from bottom of the League, to Exeter, who are third in the division.

Major weekend
fixtures and
pools check

Today
3.0 unless stated

Nationwide League

First Division
1 Reading v Crawley
2 Stockport v Oxford Utd
3 Swindon v Bury

Second Division

4 Burnley v Carlisle
5 Chesterfield v Wigan
6 Fulham v Blackpool
7 Gillingham v Wycombe
8 Grimsby v Northampton
9 Millwall v Oldham
10 Preston v Southend
11 Southend v Bristol City
12 Watford v Wrexham
13 York v Bradford

Third Division

14 Chester v Brighton
15 Doncaster v Hartlepool
16 Exeter v Swindon
17 Hull v Scarsborough
18 Leyton Orient v Peterborough
19 Lincoln v Torquay
20 Mansfield v Cambridge
21 Notts County v Macclesfield
22 Peterborough v Colchester
23 Rochdale v Darlington
24 Shrewsbury v Barnet

GM Vauxhall Conference

25 Farnborough v Morecambe
26 Gillingham v Lough
27 Hayes v Stalybridge
28 Northwich v Huddersfield
29 Rushden v Hereford
30 Southport v Kidderminster
31 Stevenage v Woking

Bell's Scottish League

Third Division
32 Ross County v Queen's Park (10)

World Cup Group One

28 Greece v Denmark (7.30)
(at Olympic stadium, Athens)
29 Slovenia v Croatia (7.30)
(at Designated stadium, Ljubljana)

World Cup Group Two

29 Georgia v Poland (2.30)
(at Boris Yelichin stadium, Tbilisi)
31 Italy v England (7.45)
(at Designated stadium, Rome)

World Cup Group Three

32 Finland v Hungary (5.0)
(at Olympic stadium, Helsinki)
33 Switzerland v Azerbaijan (7.30)
(at Wankdorf stadium, Bern)

World Cup Group Four

34 Austria v Belarus (2.0)
(at Ernst Happel stadium, Vienna)
35 Scotland v Latvia (5.0)
(at Celtic Park, Glasgow)
36 Sweden v Estonia (7.30)
(at Råsunda stadium, Stockholm)

World Cup Group Five

37 Cyprus v Luxembourg (5.0)
(at Makarios stadium, Nicosia)
38 Russia v Bulgaria (7.30)
(at Luzhniki stadium, Moscow)

World Cup Group Six

39 Czech Rep v Slovakia (7.30)
(at Letna stadium, Prague)
40 Ukraine v Yugoslavia (7.30)
(at Ta Odi stadium, Valparaiso)
41 Spain v France (7.30)
(at El Molino stadium, Gijón)

World Cup Group Seven

42 Belgium v Lithuania (5.0)
(at King Baudouin stadium, Brussels)
43 Netherlands v Turkey (7.30)
(at Amsterdam Arena)

World Cup Group Eight

44 Iceland v Liechtenstein (5.0)
(at Laugvaldinn stadium, Reykjavik)
45 Macedonia v Lithuania (5.0)
(at Gradski stadion, Skopje)
46 Rep of Ireland v Romania (5.0)
(at Lansdowne Road, Dublin)

World Cup Group Nine

47 Armenia v Ukraine (5.30)
(at Razdan stadium, Yerevan)
48 Germany v Albania (7.30)
(at Mieskowstadion, Hannover)
49 Portugal v N Ireland (5.30)
(at Estadio da Luz, Lisbon)

Tomorrow

Nationwide League
First Division
Birmingham v Wolves (4.0)
Stoke v Port Vale (1.0)

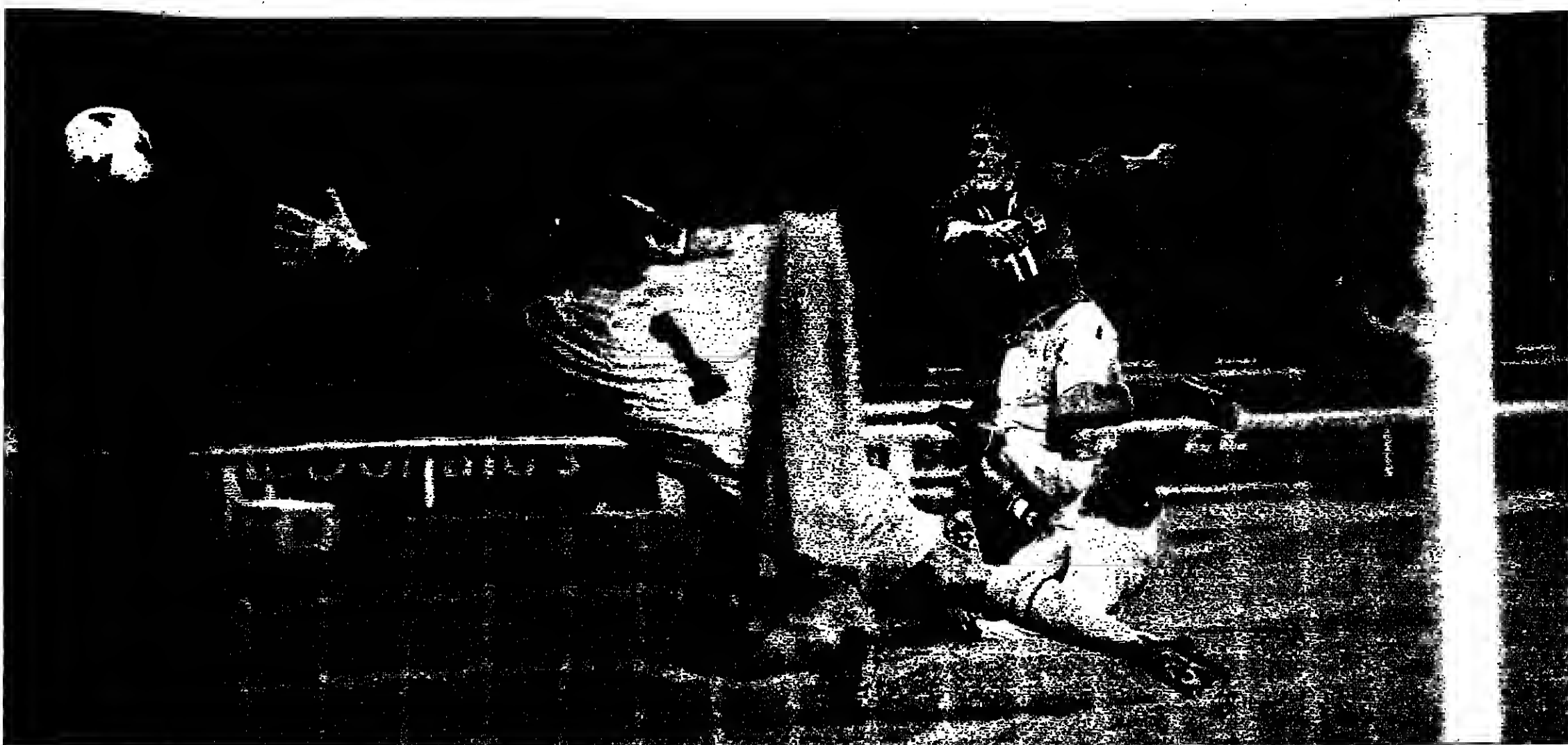
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Seaman on a mission to prevent Zola repeating himself



Italy's Gianfranco Zola hits the winner past Ian Walker, the England goalkeeper, in the World Cup qualifying match at Wembley earlier this year

Photograph: Bradley Ormesher/Daily Mirror

Talisman with a talent for tormenting Englishmen



Wembley absentee sets his focus on little feet



Do you man-mark him, isolate him or just kick him? Gianfranco Zola scored the goal that beat England at Wembley in February and is the man most likely to beat them again.

Guy Hodgson canvasses opinion on how you counter the diminutive Italian.

It seems a ridiculous assumption now, but one man and one match told Gianfranco Zola he would never prosper in the Premiership. Intriguingly, the instrument of the Italian's despair will be available to England in Rome tonight.

Zola did not play in the European Cup-Winners' Cup final in 1994. He was on the pitch for Parma that night in Copenhagen all right, but he did not figure, such was the suffocating effect of Tony Adams.

The uncompromising Arsenal captain bullied, marked, tackled and headed clear every time the ball went near Zola, leaving Parma, the holders, deprived of their play-maker and beaten. The bruising and unequal contest left its mark, in all senses of the word, on the Italian.

"It was a joke," Zola, 5ft 6in and 10st 4lb, said. "Adams did not even have to jump to win the ball. That's why I thought I'd be too small to play in England, that all defenders would be like that and I'd have no chance. But I have grown in

more ways than one since then." His award as Footballer of the Year last May confirms that, and a look at Britain's newspapers this week provide further endorsement. Daily photographs of the Chelsea striker have appeared like "man most wanted" posters.

His Premiership opponents have quickly learned to appreciate the Italian. Alex Ferguson said after Zola had scored a delightful goal against Manchester United last spring: "He's better than I thought he was." It is something a lot of opponents have discovered since his late arrival in Serie A with Napoli at the age of 23.

Deft, strong, difficult to intimidate, but above all bursting with imagination, he joined forces with Diego Maradona to help Napoli win an Italian title and was named by the Argentine as his successor. For Parma, Chelsea and Italy since he has brought verve and dangerous unpredictability.

For his part Zola has greatly enjoyed his time in England, even going so far as to suggest yesterday that there would be a touch of regret if he did score tonight. "I am sorry I have to play against England," he said. "I am having a great season with Chelsea. I am enjoying myself so much in England that that's why I will feel a little sad. I am usually pleased to score many goals for Italy, but it will not please me to score tomorrow."

So how do you stop him? Glenn Hoddle, the England coach has said he will not man-mark the Italian fearing it will

distort the team's shape, which could be a smokescreen as Newcastle's sabre-toothed tackler David Baty was forged for the job. Certainly the conventional wisdom in the Premiership is to stick close to the 32-year-old Sardinian and pray.

Leeds, Sunderland, Sheffield Wednesday and Nottingham Forest all assigned one man to nullify Zola last season and all were rewarded. "I was in two minds whether to man-mark him," Stuart Pearce, Forest's player-manager when they met Chelsea last January, said. "Then I spoke to Des Walker. He said Sheffield Wednesday had great success when they put Peter Atherton on him and that made my mind up. I did the same with Des Lytle and it worked. He kept a great player out of the game."

How great, Pearce discovered first hand a month later at Wembley. The England defender rose but missed a header that allowed Zola an opportunity. Sol Campbell raced across the area to eradicate the danger but he arrived just in time to get a faint touch that turned the Italian's shot inside Ian Walker's near post. A half-chance to Zola, no chance for England.

"He can disappear and then pop up," England's Graeme Le Saux said of his Chelsea teammate this week. "If you're not aware you'll get caught. His movement is his big asset as he proved with his goal at Wembley. We have to be aware of that and anticipate what he is going to do. At least we know more about him now."

Dennis Wise, another Chelsea team-mate would go for the former option. "Even then he can still hurt you because he's class," he said. "He's frightening sometimes. He's got it all: control, touch, use of both feet. Put him one-on-one and he'll say 'See you later' and go past you."

Hoddle tried to buy Zola when he was manager at Chelsea, deterred only by an £8m asking price that was cut almost in half by the time Ruud Gullit did get him to Stamford Bridge. The England coach needs no persuading of his talent but believes familiarity will diminish his threat.

His defenders were facing a quantity that was relatively unknown in February, whereas now they have met him in the Premiership. "Sure, we've got to respect Zola," Hoddle said. "Having said that, a lot of our players have played against him now and they recognise some of his moves. Perhaps now we can deal with him."

Hoddle has reinforced the education process with videos this week, pinpointing his runs. "The thing is to know when to go with him and when to let someone else pick him up."

Gerry Taggart, the Bolton and Northern Ireland central defender, said: "You have to be careful not leave gaps for others to run into. You need to concentrate all the time and, he paused for effect, 'get stuck in'."

That you can safely leave to Adams, if fit, but the concentration will have to spread beyond the England defender. Or else Zola will grow a little more.

If England are to deny Gianfranco Zola in Rome tonight they will need another dominating performance from David Seaman.

Ian Ridley found the England goalkeeper ready to go to work.

David Seaman is hoping that the week ends more successfully than it began. "He beat me 5-0," England's goalkeeper lamented after a fishing trip with Paul Gascoigne. Tonight the aim is the opposite: to keep that figure as slippery as any trout. Gianfranco Zola, from finding the net.

It becomes increasingly difficult to second-guess the England coach, Glenn Hoddle, and predict accurately an England team these days but it is usually a pretty safe bet that Seaman's name will be the first on the list, literally and metaphorically.

As seen in the penalty saves of Euro 96, against Scotland and Spain - since when he has conceded only two goals in eight games under Hoddle - his air of calm reassurance is crucial to England. "If the young lads are getting nervous, I'll have a quiet word with them," he says, accepting that he is among the team's elder statesmen. His imposing presence seems also a deterrent to strikers.

It is with a little fellow that he and England are most concerned tonight, however.

"You look at various strikers just to see if they do anything different. At set-pieces you can usually see, but sometimes it's hard to tell who's actually shooting when it's in the game. You are supposed to be watching the ball, you know."

"But I know Zola does pose quite a few problems, especially at free-kicks. He's crafty. He's got such tiny feet and can make the ball do a lot of things with hardly any backlift."

Seaman recently reacquainted himself with it all at first hand, when Zola scored for Chelsea against Arsenal, though the goal owed most to Mark Hughes's teasing cross.

Seaman was absent with a cartilage injury when Zola's shot deflected off Sol Campbell last February at Wembley. Ian Walker then the victim. "I was stuck in a traffic jam on the M25 listening on the radio coming back from the specialist," Seaman recalls, though he feels as vengeful as any participant that night. "There is nothing more we would like to do than beat them after what they did at Wembley," he says.

It will, he knows, be an intense experience. "I don't know if you can enjoy it. Maybe afterwards when you get the right result. It's work and there is a lot of pressure but we know what's coming, what to expect."

He is, after all, a veteran of '93 and Rotterdam, almost shuddering at the memory. "That was different. It was sudden death," he says. "If we do get beaten

this time at least we have another chance."

Seaman himself does not expect as physical a test as the other England players. "It is different with goalkeepers because the ref watches and as soon as anyone touches us they give a free-kick. In other parts of the field I expect there will be a lot of man-for-man marking. Man-for-man wrestling, really."

What does concern him are the Olympic Stadium floodlights. "Lights make a massive difference to you. Even Highbury is a totally different place at night. Looking for a cross, you can lose the ball in the lights and I have done. A lot of keepers do."

"One problem at Arsenal was having six or seven lights so close together in the corners and I managed to get the club to change that. The best type for a keeper are the pylons. But I don't think the Italians are likely to start hitting high balls in there. He has not been successful in getting a training session under the Rome lights, but Hoddle did not seem too concerned. "Goalkeepers will make any excuse," he said.

Seaman was making none about recent errors, notably the goal at Highbury with which PAOK Salonika eliminated Arsenal from the UEFA Cup, which have led some to question his form. Though he insists with the promising Austrian Alex Manninger pushing him at Highbury, and an in-form Dennis Bergkamp and

Ian Wright to practice against, he is sharp enough.

In fact, he believes, his opposite number, Angelo Peruzzi, who conceded three for Juventus against Manchester United last week, will come into the game with more concerns about form. "He looks small but he gets himself around," Seaman says. "I don't like letting in goals in. I don't know what type of guy he is but I wouldn't be happy."

"I'm used to criticism," he goes on, adding aptly and accurately. "I am there to be shot at." Though 34, last month, he does not believe he is yet at his peak. "I would say no. There's still a lot to learn. Plus, I might get another contract out of it."

Ray Clemence, England's goalkeeping coach, chips in: "It's because David's mistakes are so rare that people pick them up. It's also easy to forget some of his less publicised contributions, like a great save against Barnsley last Saturday when it was 0-0."

England and Seaman will settle for as much tonight. "It's all about qualifying," he says. "It's all about focusing on not making a mistake."

THE KEY CONFRONTATIONS: GLENN MOORE'S ANALYSIS OF WHERE THE MATCH WILL BE WON AND LOST



Sol Campbell
Tottenham
age: 23
caps: 10



Gianfranco Zola
Chelsea
age: 31
caps: 34



Paul Gascoigne
Rangers
age: 30
caps: 52



Paul Ince
Liverpool
age: 29
caps: 33



Demetrio Albertini
Milan
age: 26
caps: 46



Dino Baggio
Parma
age: 26
caps: 4



David Beckham
Man Utd
age: 22
caps: 10



Paolo Maldini
Milan
age: 29
caps: 82

Glenn Hoddle will not be man-marking Zola but Campbell is likely to find himself picking up the Sardinian whenever he moves forward. Zola's greatest strengths are his movement and close control. Campbell, who has become an international defender of stature in the past year, should be equal to the control but may be lost by the movement. The experience of Tony Adams may then be needed.

After being partly at fault for Zola's Wembley goal, Campbell has something to prove and, like most English players, he now knows something of Zola's tricks. Only real concern is occasional tendency to have an off-day, as recently against Emile Heskey.

The key battle, with temperament as much a factor as ability. Both pairs have plenty of the latter. Gascoigne and Ince perhaps a better balanced partnership. The Englishmen will be highly motivated on their return to Italy and will need to keep calm against the inevitable tugs and niggles, especially Gascoigne. Albertini likes to sit and spray the ball like a quarter-back so Sheringham and Wright may be asked to make him hurry, if so he is likely to settle for unspectacular ticking-over passing rather than risk losing possession. Baggio is more of a ball-winner, like David Baty, who will make up England's central midfield. With Roberto Di Matteo's ability to attack with the ball denied to Italy by suspension, Attilio Lombardo may complete their middle trio.



Ian Wright
Arsenal
age: 33, 28

Cannavaro marked Shearer out of the game at Wembley in an impressive international debut. He has retained his place since and his pace is likely to see him give the job of marking Wright while Costacurta sweeps. Wright knows his international career will be over if England fail to make the World Cup finals which would be unfortunate after such an impressive late international blossoming.



Fabio Cannavaro
Parma
age: 24, 9

A further chance to assess Beckham's development as he comes up against the world's greatest left-back. At Wembley in February Beckham had little joy on the flank and Maldini, if he plays there, is unlikely to let him get past on the outside on Saturday. Early crosses may be in order for Beckham though club team-mate Karel Poborsky, who gave Maldini a rare roasting in Euro '96, may have given him some tips. One of Beckham's main tasks will be defensive as Maldini is a potent force when moving forward. At set-pieces, however, someone else should be deputised to jump with Maldini who is a powerful header. As the Italy manager's son, Maldini will be more motivated than anyone.

RECENT HISTORY OF ENGLAND V ITALY

- 24.5.61 (Rome) Italy 2 England 3
- 14.6.73 (Turin) Italy 2 England 0
- 14.11.73 (Wembley) England 0 Italy 1
- 28.5.76 (New York) England 3 Italy 2
- 17.11.76 (Rome, World Cup qualifier) Italy 2 England 0
- 15.11.77 (Wembley, World Cup qualifier) England 2 Italy 0
- 15.6.80 (Turin, European Championships) Italy 1 England 0
- 6.6.85 (Mexico City) England 1 Italy 2
- 15.11.89 (Wembley) England 0 Italy 0
- 7.7.90 (Bari, World Cup final third-place play-off) Italy 2 England 1
- 12.2.97 (Wembley, World Cup qualifier) England 0 Italy 1
- 4.6.97 (Nantes, Le Tournoi) England 2 Italy 0

Special occasion to bring out the best in the drinking classes

Pubs, clubs and bars across the land are expecting record profits tonight with England's game against Italy being shown live only on Sky, so denying terrestrial fans the chance to watch the game from their armchairs if they want to see it as it happens.

There are almost 40,000 such drinking establishments in the UK, and they expect to make additional profits of around £20m due to the sale of additional drinks and food. The brewers Carling expect a rise in sales similar to the one they experienced during Euro '96. Andy Sutherland, a Carling spokesman, said that "volume in pub sales climbed by 28 per cent. We expect a similar reaction on Saturday."

Bars across the country are urging fans to arrive early in order to get a seat and avoid disappointment. Tom Gilman, manager of the Sports Cafe in Leeds said: "We are telling

people to come down by 4pm."

Landlords across the country are getting into the spirit of the occasion. Marc Casey, owner of the Hogobolin in Bristol, has transformed his pub to give a stadium atmosphere with surround sound speakers connected to two huge screens. "The pub's full of red, white and blue hunting and our famous 'Gazza's dentist chair' where punters down tequila shots," Casey said.

Billy Gilligan, landlord of the Scarisbrick Arms in Lancashire, is making a stand against Sky's domination of televised football. "We will be watching on ITV at 10.0pm. The windows will all be blacked out during the game and there will be someone on the door warning people not to mention the result. Anyone caught whispering the score will be shown a red card and be banned for four meals," Gilligan said.

GROUP FOUR: SCOTLAND v LATVIA

Brown wary of the Latvian threat

Only a team from a tiny Baltic state stand between Scotland and automatic qualification for the World Cup finals.

The Tartan Army is getting ready to party in the streets of Glasgow, but, as Phil Shaw discovered, the word from the Scotland camp is caution first, celebration second.

If, before the schedule for the qualifying series was drawn up, Glenn Hoddle and Craig Brown had been asked to choose between needing only a point from their last match or having to win and still not be certain of reaching the World Cup finals, it is safe to assume neither would have selected the second option.

Had it been explained, however, that the choice would lie between holding Italy in a stadium where they are practically invincible and beating Latvia in a ground heaving with home supporters, the answer might have been different.

By the time eternal enemy get underway in the Eternal City

tonight, Celtic Park will have sent the Tartan Army away to become a menace to sobriety.

The signs are, both in terms of Scotland's record under Brown and the precedents of five successful campaigns in the past quarter of a century, that they will be drinking to remember.

"We have to show our usual enthusiasm, but it must be tempered by great concentration," he said, after the final training session beneath a cloudburst at Kilmorock. "One lapse in that area could be fatal."

"Fortunately our players are hugely experienced. A lot of them play in the English Premiership where a second's loss of concentration can kill you."

To some, this may sound like talking up a tiny Baltic state who have beaten only Belarus and Estonia in Group Four. But Brown could take an honour course in the football of the former Soviet republic and his studies convince him that the likes of Vitas Rimkus, a striker he likens to Gerd Müller, and the playmaker, Vladimir Babichev, are a cut above most of their contemporaries.

"Latvia try to play," he warned. "They do get men back behind the ball when they

lose possession, but unlike Belarus they look capable of scoring. You worry about them from the point of view of the quick counter-attack. We need to impose ourselves on the game and dictate the tempo."

In keeping with his determined low-key style, Brown is unlikely to spring any selection surprises. Despite having only four caps, Christian Dailly looks certain to keep his place in the back three. The return of Colin Hendry to that unit may mean Tom Boyd earning his 50th cap in left-midfield at the expense of Josh McKinlay, whose lack of first-team opportunities with Celtic could count against him.

Up front, where Simon Donnelly has been enjoying a scoring streak for the host club, Gordon Durie's experience should earn him the nod as Kevin Gallacher's partner. McKinlay's ability to deliver free-kicks and crosses, along with the drive and scoring knack of David Hopkin, will doubtless be summoned if Scotland struggle.

Brown, while seeking a balance between confidence and caution, sees no reason why they should. "We take optimism from the way we beat Belarus and the fact that our players are



The Scotland manager Craig Brown (left) and Colin Hendry prepare for action

Photograph: Scottish Daily Record

all in such good form. John Collins, for instance, is now captain. Monaco. Gary McAllister's back to top form after a much needed summer break. Kevin Gallacher's on fire, and Roy Hodgson says he has seen Colin Hendry has been immense for Blackburn since he got back to 100 per cent fitness.

"These players deserve to qualify for their attitude. The fans deserve it too - we've had a full house at every home game and a fantastic away

following. I saw the Swedes in Belarus and they had about a dozen supporters. We took several hundred."

The match in Minsk produced one of 17 clean sheets in Scotland's last 23 fixtures: incredibly they have let in just three goals in 15 hours of competitive football since losing to England at Euro 96. Reinforced by such statistics, Brown expects to win "1-0 or 2-0" and anticipates that victory would suffice.

"Put it this way," he said, "I

am looking for a stewards' inquiry if Spain lose at home to the Faroe Islands and take the best runners-up place."

Whatever the outcome, the Scotland squad will disperse after the game - not to reconvene until Denmark visit Ibiza for a friendly in March - rather than staying together to watch the "other" match.

As part of Channel Five's promotion for their coverage of the Scotland game, Brown appeared on *The Jack Doch-*

ty Show late on Thursday. "He was trying to set me up to say I hoped England would lose," the manager said, before revealing that bravado does enter his thinking after all.

"I hope they win - and that we then get our revenge by beating them in the World Cup semi-final."

SCOTLAND (Probable 3-5-2): Leighton (Aberdeen); Calderwood (Tottenham), Hendry (Blackburn), Dailly (Derby), Barry (Colchester), McAllister (Sheff Wed), Gallacher (Blackburn), Durie (Preston).

Danes steel themselves for Greek onslaught

Peter Schmeichel has become used to keeping goal in front of hostile crowds during all his years with Manchester United, but even he might be taken aback by what lies in wait for him and his Danish team-mates tonight.

Denmark hold a three-point lead in Group One, but if they lose to Greece in front of 75,000 fervent fans in Athens' Olympic Stadium tonight they will have to settle for a place in the play-offs and the Greeks will snatch the automatic qualifying place.

Schmeichel is one of five British-based players in the Danes' likely starting XI. Another, Brian Laudrup of Rangers, who is hoping to recover from a tendon injury, knows what is needed tonight. "We have come here to win," he said. "The Greeks have come a long way but I still believe we are a better team."

His brother, Michael, is fit after a thigh injury but the Derby defender Jacob Laursen will miss the match after pulling a groin muscle. Mikkel Beck, the Middlesbrough striker, has joined the squad as a replacement. "The choice of Beck, a striker, to replace Laursen, a defender is strange," one Danish journalist said. "I fear he was called because Brian Laudrup is still in pain."

The Greek coach, Costas Polychronidis, knows what his plans will be. "We will attack from the first minute hoping for an early goal," he said yesterday.

If the Greeks lose they could be eliminated altogether - if Croatia win in Slovenia. That scenario would earn the Croats a place in the play-offs, where they could be drawn against Yugoslavia.

- Rupert Metcalf

GROUP EIGHT: REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

McCarthy chooses Houghton

Ray Houghton will captain the Republic of Ireland for the first time in today's World Cup qualifier against Romania in Dublin - and his manager is convinced he has made a wide choice.

Mick McCarthy named the 35-year-old Reading player-coach as the stand-in captain for the injured Andy Townsend and said: "He's been doing this kind of job for years without actually wearing the armband."

"It's a nice reward for him after all the service he's given Ireland over the years. His qualities are well known to everybody and I have been

exalting his virtues for ages. Ray is a talker on the pitch, always encouraging other players and leading by example."

Houghton will be Ireland's third different captain in consecutive matches. Aston Villa's Steve Staunton, who took over from the suspended Townsend for the 2-1 win in Lithuania last month, has been left out of McCarthy's squad this week.

He is one of 17 Republic players on a yellow card; and McCarthy's dilemma is whether to risk any of the others, who could fall foul of suspension for the first leg of the World Cup play-offs on 29 October.

GROUP SEVEN: WALES

Giggs given Gould's vote of confidence

Ryan Giggs, the new captain of Wales, has revealed that his dream is to lead his country to the World Cup finals. The 23-year-old Manchester United winger, who has won medals galore in the English game, even puts his Welsh quest above more titles at Old Trafford.

Giggs takes over as captain from the suspended Gary Speed for the encounter with Belgium in Brussels tonight, with Wales already out of the tournament. He said: "Captaining my country has been a dream of mine. I have thought about it and hoped it would happen but I am a little sur-

prised it has come so quickly." Only Mike England, at 22, captained the Welsh at a younger age than Cardiff-born Giggs.

Bobby Gould, the Wales manager, will probably restore Speed to the captaincy for Wales' next international - but it is clear that Giggs could well become skipper permanently in the future.

Giggs said: "I have won so much for Manchester United but this will be the greatest moment of my life. I will be so proud to lead Wales out."

"I do not believe it is out of the question that one day Wales will reach the World Cup finals.

Reaching that stage is more important to me personally than anything, but of course I want more titles too with United."

Giggs' previous experience of captaincy was with England Schoolboys, Wales' youth XI and United's youth team.

Gould, who will not name his team until just before the kick-off, said: "This is all part of Ryan's football education. Alex Ferguson has nurtured him at United into a wonderful player. I talked to Ryan briefly before he came out to Brussels and he has reacted very positively to the challenge. It is a great honour for him."

Lomas keeps the armband

Steve Lomas is set for a long reign as Northern Ireland's captain. His international manager, Bryan Hamilton, was very impressed with how the West Ham midfielder performed in his first match as skipper against Albania last month, and had no hesitation in handing him the armband again for tonight's World Cup qualifier against Portugal in Lisbon - even though Jim Magilton, who led the Irish against Germany, has returned to the squad after injury.

Lomas, who has 23 caps, may only be 23, but Hamilton feels he has great leadership

qualities. It is a view shared by the Hammers' manager, Harry Redknapp, who made Lomas his captain earlier this season. "He's young, and could be captain for a long time," he said.

Portugal need to win in Benfica's Stadium of Light and hope Ukraine drop points in Armenia to claim second place in Group Nine and a play-off spot. Northern Ireland have drawn their last two matches against the Portuguese, including a fine 1-1 draw in Porto two years ago. "They have got to go for it, so hopefully they will leave some gaps at the back," Lomas said.

World Cup 1998: The countdown to France's festival of football

THE FINALS

The World Cup finals start on Wednesday 10 June. The final is at the new Stade de France in Paris on Sunday 12 July. The draw for the World Cup finals will take place in Marseilles on Thursday 4 December. A record number of 32 teams will take part in the finals, which will feature 64 matches.

Finals format: First round: Eight groups of four teams. Second round: Last 16 (group winners and runners-up) knock-out. Quarter-finals: Last eight knock-out. Semi-finals: Last four knock-out.

ALREADY QUALIFIED

Hosts France

Holders Brazil

Europe Norway

Bulgaria Spain

Romania South America Argentina

Colombia Paraguay

Africa Nigeria

Morocco Tunisia

South Africa Cameroon

Still to qualify: Europe: 11 more teams (six to be decided today). South America: One more team. Concacaf: Three teams. Asia-Oceania: Four teams.

EUROPE

Qualification process: The first round of European qualification ends today with the nine-group winners and the best runners-up (see runners-up standings) qualifying directly for the finals.

The other eight runners-up will be drawn on Monday in four pairs and play qualifying matches on a home and away basis on 29 October and 15 November. The four winners on aggregate will also qualify for the finals.

European Group One

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Denmark	7	5	1	1	14	6	16
Greece	7	4	2	1	11	4	13
Croatia	7	3	1	3	11	12	7
Romania	6	3	0	3	9	14	9
Slovenia	7	0	1	6	4	17	1

Remaining fixtures: Today: Greece v Denmark; Slovenia v Croatia.

Denmark, who have recalled the Mid-lands forward Mikkel Beck, travel to the cauldron of the Olympic stadium in Athens knowing that a draw will ensure qualification for France. A Greek win, however, would earn the home side top place on goal difference. If the Greeks don't win they, like Italy, will miss out altogether, though because Croatia can be expected to gain maximum points away to their Balkan neighbours, Slovenia, the sections bottom team. That would be enough to earn the Croats a play-off place unless Greece win.

One to watch

Erik Mikkelsen (Denmark)
Brian Laudrup (Denmark) has been crushed by Croatia at Euro 96, few would have expected Denmark to be where they are now: four points ahead of the Croats. The outstanding Rasmus Jensen has much of the credit; he scored a late leveller in a 1-1 draw in Croatia and opened the scoring in a 2-1 home win over the Croats. When he was absent, the Danes were done 3-0 in Bosnia.

Group Two

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	7	5	0	2	11	7	15
Italy	7	4	1	2	11	10	13
Poland	7	3	1	3	10	10	10
Germany	7	2	1	4	9	17	7
Malta	7	0	0	7	2	21	0

Remaining fixtures: Today: Italy v England; Germany v Poland.

In contrast to Group One, the qualification equation is simple. If England draw or win, their fans can start cooking their Coronation cakes. They might even qualify today if they lose - as long as the Scots do not win. England have worries over David Beckham (heavy cold) and Gareth Southgate (knee injury) who play only today. Italy's experienced defender Claudio Tassinari, is on the road to recovery from a knee injury. Italy's Gianfranco Zola has said that his countrymen are at their best when they are up against it. Tonight, we will find out if that is true.

One to watch

Teddy Sheringham (England)
Not, perhaps, the obvious choice as England's man of the qualifying series but, if Hoddle's team get a draw in Rome and top the group despite losing only one point off Italy, one can think of Sheringham, who scored in both Poland and Georgia to help England, to away wins which were beyond the Italians against the same opposition.

Group Three

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Norway	7	5	0	2	11	6	15
Hungary	7	3	2	2	9	7	11
France	7	1	3	3	10	13	7
Switzerland	7	2	1	4	6	12	7
Azerbaijan	7	0	0	7	3	17	0

Remaining fixtures: Today: Poland v Hungary; Switzerland v Azerbaijan.

Norway have won the group easily, so all that remains to be decided is the play-off place. With home advantage, Finland ought to be able to see off a Hungarian side who have nothing in common except nationality with the mighty Magyars of the early 1980s. Jarri Litmanen of Ajax is a class act, while all his Finnish team-mates have learned much from their coach, Richard Mulder Nielsen, who steered Denmark to success in the 1992 European Championship. However, Rangers' Arndt Nentl is injured so the Finns must choose between two inexperienced underdogs in goal.

One to watch

Erik Mikkelsen (Norway)
In winning their group, Norway have been unbeaten in their last five matches. In May, though, a full-strength Brazil were beaten 4-2 in a friendly in Oslo. Tor Arne Flo and Rony Johnson were both in fine form but after the game Flo wanted to know the names of the players who stole the show with some stirring runs from midfield. The answer: Erik Mikkelsen, who adds fair to a functional team.

Group Four

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Scotland	7	5	2	0	13	3	18
Sweden	7	4	0	3	13	11	12
Latvia	7	3	1	3	10	12	10
Estonia	7	1	1	5	7	15	4
Belarus	7	1	1	5	7	15	4

Remaining fixtures: Today: Austria v Belarus; Scotland v Latvia; Sweden v Estonia.

Austria are inconsistent, but they should be far too good for Belarus and thus win the group. If Scotland also win, at home to Latvia, they will reach the finals as the best of the second-placed teams. Sweden, who will surely beat Estonia, can snatch second place in the unlikely event of the Scots losing in Glasgow. Scotland must not be complacent, though. Although their best player, Vlatko Andriyevich, is suspended, the Latvians are a decent side who have benefited from the European experience of their top club, Skonto Riga.

One to watch

Andreas Herzog (Austria)
The best Austrian player of his generation. A midfielder who plays his club football for Werder Bremen in Germany's Bundesliga, he scored the only goal of a crucial qualifier in Sweden and repeated the feat at home to the Swedes - a game Austria won despite trailing the game with nine men. He will have a foot operation next week and will be out for up to five months.

Group Five

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bulgaria	7	6	0	1	15	5	18
Russia	7	4	2	1	13	14	14
Belgium	7	4	1	2	13	13	13
Wales	7	2	1	4	9	18	7
Cyprus	7	0	0	7	2	20	0

Remaining fixtures: Today: Cyprus v Luxembourg; Russia v Belgium.

Whatever happens today, the top two placings in this group will not change. Bulgaria have qualified for the play-off places. With home advantage, the captain of the team who reached the last four in 1994: Ivaylo, Balakov, Lichkov, Stoitchev and Kostadinov. The new players, including Georgi Bachkov and Georgi Ivanov, both just promoted from the Under-21 squad, are untested at top level. Russia have rarely looked fluent in the qualifiers and have received two wretched goals for today's game: Igor Dobrovolski and the former Millwall striker Sergei Yuranov, now with VfL Bochum in the German Bundesliga.

One to watch

Trifun Ivanov (Bulgaria)
The captain of Bulgaria is one of Europe's most feared - and hairiest - defenders. He also scores vital goals, including the only goal of the game against Russia last month, a victory which confirmed Bulgaria's place in France. A charismatic player who has become a national hero in western Europe, Ivanov will make his mark on the field in more ways than one.

Group Six

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	7	6	0	1	15	5	18
Yugoslavia	7	4	2	1	13	11	14
Slovenia	7	3	1	3	10	12	10
Czech Rep	7	1	4	2	10	13	7
Faroe Isles	7	0	0	7	2	20	0

Remaining fixtures: Today: Malta v Yugoslavia; Czech Republic v Slovenia; Spain v Faroe Isles.

Even if the unthinkable should happen and the Spaniards lose at home to the Faroes today and Yugoslavia beat the Maltese to win the group, Spain would still qualify for the finals as the best of the runners-up. As ever, Spain look a solid side but, because their clubs employ so many foreign players, some of their squad spend their weekends on substitutes' benches. The Yugoslavs will be tough opponents for anyone in the play-offs - as long as they do not have to rely on Savo Misic to score their goals.

One to watch

For over a decade the Spanish team has been stronger in defence than in attack - and he is not surprising because the top clubs in the Primera Liga always have forward lines filled with expensive foreigners. The best of the defenders is the durable and combative Hierro, an experienced Real Madrid man who can also play as a midfielder.

Group Seven

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Netherlands	7	6	0	1	15	4	18
Belgium	7	5	0	2	17	15	15
Ukraine	7	2	1	4	9	13	7
San Marino	7	0	0	7	0	40	0

Remaining fixtures: Today: Belgium v Wales; Netherlands v Turkey.

The Netherlands will win the group unless they lose at home to the Turks tonight and Belgium beat Wales 4-0. The Welsh can be a bad side - but not that bad. The Turks could reach the play-offs if they win and so do Wales, but that is not very likely either. They will be overhauled if Portugal beat the Dutch squad to replace the suspended Wim Jonck. Other English-based players are Omerhan Arslan, Nottingham Forest's Pierre van Hock, and the Chelsea goalkeeper Ed de Gooijer. Despite injury problems, Belgium have dropped Newcastle's Philippe Albert.

One to watch

Omerhan Arslan (Netherlands)
He has been scoring goals for Arsenal all season and he has also scored twice for his country in the qualifiers - as Wales remember, their best player in the last international. Bobby Gould's side were humiliated 7-1 last year. He is more than just a classic goalscorer, though, he also makes goals for others. His all-round play is outstanding, a coach's dream.

Group Eight

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Romania	7	6	0	1	15	3	18
Ukraine	7	4	2	1	13	11	14
Macaronesia	7	1	1	5	10	18	5
Ukraine	7	0	0	7	2	20	0

Remaining fixtures: Today: Ireland v Lithuania; Republic of Ireland v Romania; Macedonia v Ukraine.

Even if Romania win in Dublin to go through the campaign without dropping a point, the Irish will finish second unless Lithuania win 11-0 in Macedonia. Ireland are without the injured Robbie Keane and Townsend and have left out Stuart Pearce and have left out Stuart Pearce and have left out Stuart Pearce. Ireland are without the injured Robbie Keane and Townsend and have left out Stuart Pearce and have left out Stuart Pearce.

One to watch

Bogdan Stancu (Romania)
He was dropped during USA 96 and he flopped at Euro 96, but the colourful Stancu is still in goal for Romania - and he has played a big part in his side maintaining a 100 per cent record during the qualifiers. Not least during the 1-0 home win over the Republic of Ireland, when he brought down Ray Houghton to concede a penalty but got up to save Roy Keane's spot-kick.

Group Nine

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	7	6	0	1	15	4	18
Ukraine	7	5	0	2	17	15	15
Portugal	7	4	1	2	13	13	13
Armenia	7	2	1	4	9	13	7
N Ireland	7	0	1	6	4	19	1

Remaining fixtures: Today: Belgium v Ukraine; Portugal v Northern Ireland; Armenia v Ukraine.

Germany should beat Albania, whose players seem more interested in seeking political asylum than striving for points away from home, to win the group. If Ukraine win in Armenia they will be in the play-offs, but if they draw they will be overhauled if Portugal beat Northern Ireland at home. Germany will be without the injured Matthias Sammer, Jürgen Klinsmann and Ulf Kirsten, while Portugal's injured substitutes are the defender Jorge Costa and goalkeeper Vítor Baia. Their midfield playmaker Rui Costa is suspended.

One to watch

Serghei Rebrov (Ukraine)
Reaching the play-offs



SPORT

Saturday 11 October 1997

England must battle against history and histrionics

After 13 months and 6,000 miles, England's journey to France 98 and the 16th World Cup has reached a crucial stage. If they avoid defeat against Italy tonight, they will qualify for football's biggest tournament for the first time in eight years. If they fail, they will have to face a play-off. From Rome Glenn Moore, our Football Correspondent, assesses their chances.

The last time England played a World Cup tie in Italy, the result was immaterial. When they meet tonight, the result will be everything.

The last encounter, at Italia 90, was the unluckiest third place play-off. With both countries still shattered by losing semi-finals on penalties the game was an irrelevance, memorable only for being unusually open.

Tonight's game is unlikely to be anything like as watchable but an 83,000 crowd, and millions of television viewers in both countries, will be consumed by it. Individual and national pride are at stake, personal and professional fortunes hang in the balance.

The winner has the ultimate prize, a place in next summer's World Cup finals in France. It is a bigger prize than winning the competition itself - for the ignominy, for two such proud footballing countries, of not even being there is immeasurable. It was bad enough for England in 1994, when the finals were in America. Imagine missing out when they are just across the Channel, or, for Italy, just over the Alps.

True, there is a second chance. If the runner-up in the group does not qualify as the best second-placed finisher, they will still have a two-legged play-off. The Italians are more confident than the English of passing such a test



Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, takes centre stage yesterday as his squad train for tonight's World Cup qualifier against Italy in Rome

Photograph: Ross Kinaird/Allsport

but, with strong sides like Croatia, Russia and Yugoslavia among possible opponents, neither can be sure.

England's task is simple - they need a point. But it is not easy. Italy have played 15 World Cup ties in Rome dating back more than 60 years and won them all. England have not won in Italy since 1961 and, four years ago, lost to the Netherlands in Rotterdam when faced with an identical assignment.

They were a little unlucky that night and will need fortune as well as resilience, skill and nerve this evening. If they have fortune, they could make one. Qualifying for the World Cup will be worth, according to the Football Association's marketing chief, £100m to English football. Some of this will filter directly to the players, up to £200,000 per man.

Even by today's standards this is a tidy sum but Phil Carling, the FA promotions direc-

tor, is correct when he said the motivation in the Stadio Olimpico will not be the money. The chance to play at the pinnacle of the game will be the factor that will encourage players to keep making the trekking runs, to put a head among flying boots and, hopefully, to assume responsibility.

Of England's present squad only Paul Gascoigne, the inspiration in 1990, has played in a finals campaign. Like Paul Ince,

who was yesterday named captain, Tony Adams, Teddy Sheringham and Ian Wright, Gascoigne knows he may not get another opportunity. If he and Ince, the two *Serie A* veterans, can gain control in midfield England ought to succeed. If they do not England, with fitness doubts surrounding central defence, may become over-dependent on David Seaman.

The portents are mixed. "Put them together and you have the

ideal midfielder," said Glenn Hoddle, "so they are a well-balanced pair." Technically, maybe, but not always temperamentally.

Gascoigne, according to Hoddle, is maturing fast, but not so fast that he was prepared to risk exposing him to the combined wiles of the English and Italian media. "He can get too tense," admitted Hoddle, "I will be sitting down and chatting to him."

Hoddle, presumably, has no such worries over Ince, having

chosen him to be captain ahead of Adams. "Paul is made for this game, he is coming back to somewhere where he has a lot of respect and did extremely well," Hoddle said. "Tony is still on his way back to full fitness. He has been out a very long time and, if he starts the game, I want him to be 110 per cent focused on his performance. To give him the responsibility of captaincy may hinder that."

Given that Adams has coped

with the captaincy of Arsenal and, periodically, England, for more than a decade despite suffering "donkey" abuse, alcoholism and imprisonment, this seems unlikely. However, Hoddle insists that Adams struggled to combine both roles in Arsenal's recent match at Chelsea and he would not want a repeat. Besides, said Hoddle, "Ince will definitely start."

Adams is one of three fitness concerns. Gareth Southgate and David Beckham being the others. While Hoddle's worries over Adams are about his general physical and mental sharpness, the others are specific. Southgate has a stiff thigh while Beckham has a cold. Both are rated 50-50, but, judging by their condition at training last night, are unlikely to play.

The final selection is still such a mystery. Apart from the fitness doubts, the big debate is whether to play Steve McNamaman, and at whose expense, and who to play wide left. Given England need a draw David Batty is likely to keep McNamaman out in a five-man midfield, although on both previous times Hoddle has met Italy he has played one striker up front with two forwards (McNamaman and Matt Le Tissier at Wembley, Sheringham and Paul Scholes in Nantes) tucked in behind. On the left Graeme Le Saux may just see off the challenge of Phil Neville (also Beckham's understudy on the right) and Andy Hinchcliffe.

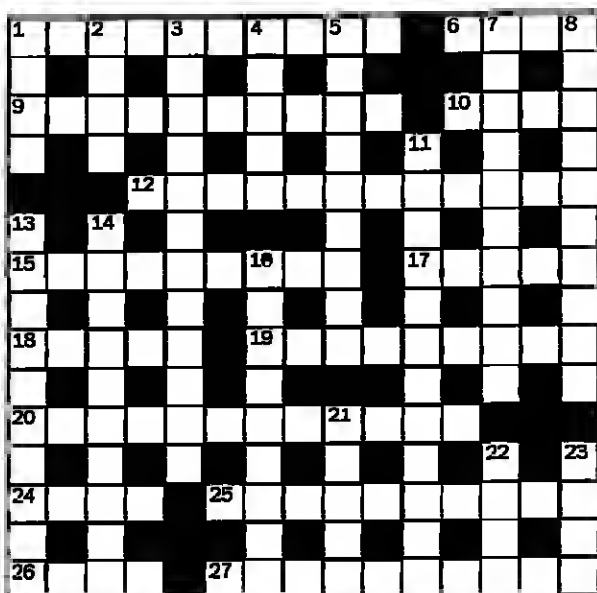
The Italians, who have named their team, will be with-outo Ciro Ferrara. Alessandro Costacurta will sweep behind a back three while Christian Vieri has won the nod to partner Gianfranco Zola.

While England have failed to qualify for three of the last six World Cups, Italy have not been absent since 1958. At least three of tonight's team played in the last final, when Italy lost to Brazil on penalties. England's task is formidable but achievable. ITALY (4-4-4): Rossi; Costacurta, Cannavaro, Nesta, Maldini, Lombardo, Albertini, Di Biaggio, Di Livio, Zola, Vieri. ENGLAND (4-4-4): Seaman; Southgate, Scholes, Batty, Le Tissier, Wright, Adams, Campbell, Beckham, P. Neville, Gascoigne, Ince, Batty, Le Tissier, Sheringham, Wright.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

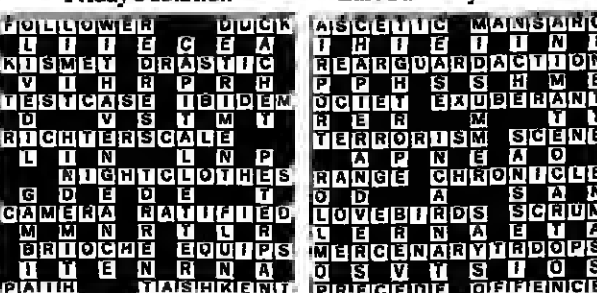
No. 3427, Saturday 11 October

By Mass



Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution



ACROSS

- Two birds, audible before me, variegated (10)
- Eager to see a good turn returned (4)
- Against wearing lordly waterproof? (10)
- Tract has margin moved back (4)
- Imperfect attributes of certain bees? (12)
- Stair with moving case, reportedly of more recent date? (9)
- Gunn finds parts of dentures intolerable (5)
- Puncture's cause of parking offence, we hear (5)
- The cloth participates with those in confession (9)
- Cogent factor reducing trade with craft round American island (12)
- See moon ultimately wax around the country (4)
- Edge back, facing awful time in journey (10)
- Hard joining military elite's framework (4)
- They're enough to provoke the jitters (10)

DOWN

- Pawn, look, delivering mate (4)
- Cut east and run (4)
- Ticker expert has 100 or so (digital) for repair (12)
- Dashes, flies around Italy (5)
- Girl to take up role in celebrated play (9)
- They're attuned to variations in pitch? (10)
- Talk idly about shrines designed for show (10)
- Musical's clear, is immersed in endless lucidity (12)
- Note, daughter likes eating very soft fruits (3,7)
- Actions involving the bar? (10)
- Is it caused by the endless lifting? (9)
- Dizzy from glare (5)
- Whip up old Mexican dish (4)
- Jam the communication, losing time (4)

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. Please use the box number and postcode. M Crutebank, Glasgow; D Forrest, West Kirby; J Cooper, London W4; B Bevan, London W11.

When 90 minutes lasts the night

Saturday is not the night for a football match that means so much. Adam Szreter looks forward anxiously to an experience that will tax friendships and upset domestic life.

Thank God we don't play football every Saturday night. How do the Spanish and the French manage it? This week has been bad enough, trying to get the message through to your other half, your non-footballing half, that you just aren't going to be in a normal frame of mind come 7.45 tonight.

I decided to invite some friends around, but the first one had exactly the same problem. "Well, I'm going to be watching it, but Cath's not really very keen on football," he said.

"Well that's fine," I replied, "because neither is June. They can, er, go in the kitchen or something, and talk. I'm going to invite a few other people and they won't all be interested in the football." "Er, yes," he didn't sound too convinced.

"We can lay on some food, nothing formal, a buffet type thing," I said, "and it's not as though it goes on all evening." You always think it only lasts 90 minutes, you never legislate for pre-match, post-match, half-time, injury time. At least there won't be extra time and penalties. Shame.

One person I won't be inviting is my new friend Paolo. We reached a very early decision not to watch the match together. It was soon after I'd gone round to see the Manchester United-Juventus game with Paolo and his friend.

It was mostly pretty civilised. I agreed that Brian Moore was not the most impartial commentator and I was quick to concede that Sheringham had been yards offside when Scholes scored United's second, soon after the half-time pizza had arrived. I wondered if that was what Italians do when they watch a football match. We drink beer, they eat pizza.

It all went uncomfortably quiet after Deschamps was sent off. No complaints from Paolo, just the dawning realisation that the unthinkable

was about to happen and Juventus were going to lose.

Paolo put a call through on Wednesday, ostensibly to give me his new address but really to wish me bad luck for Saturday. He said Ian Wright was the one they feared most, and agreed that threatening to arrest Paul Gascoigne as soon as he arrived in Italy was not really in the spirit of things. I wished him good luck in the play-offs.

I rang my friend David in Rome, who will watch the match in the square around the corner from his office, where they've erected a giant screen, and he'd also placed an order with his local flower shop.

After Italy had beaten England at Wembley in February, he arrived at work to find a bunch of chrysanthemums on his desk, the traditional mark of respect at an Italian funeral. "I'm looking forward to this," he said. "This is my moment."

I hadn't the heart to point out that, when it comes to the crunch, England invariably lose. If only it could be different this time. But please, whatever the outcome, never again on a Saturday night.

Fears grow as touts cash in

Fears of trouble flaring during England's World Cup decider against Italy tonight grew yesterday when touts were seen openly selling tickets to England fans outside Rome's Olympic Stadium. One party of supporters from Rochdale bought up to 20 tickets, ask 10,000 English fans began to gather in the city.

In the middle of Rome a tout with an east London accent was offering English fans "as many tickets as you like" in the sections of the stadium reserved for Italians. Some tickets were being offered for £150, others surprisingly for as little as £20.

There are also concerns that the seating arrangements, with fans from opposing sides close together, could lead to trouble.

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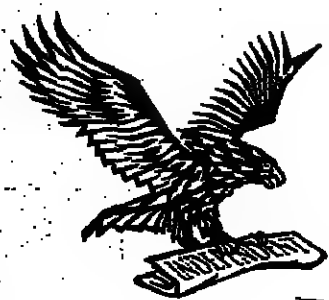
Ye shall drink no wine,

Jeremiah 35:6

for it is written

Label 43

هَذَا مِنْ الْأَصْلِ



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PERSONAL FINANCE, PROPERTY & MOTORING

Saturday 11 October 1997

هَذَا مِنْ الْأَصْلِ



'Reading the Will' by D Wilde: Time spent choosing competent executors, whether lay or professional, can prevent complications arising when the estate is administered

Photograph: Mary Evans Picture Library

Before you go, do your heirs one last favour

Your head won't ache when the time comes to read your will. But you could be leaving a real and potentially costly headache for your heirs if you fail to make your wishes crystal clear, or if you have not bothered to appoint executors who are competent to administer your estate. Rachel Fissen reports.

You've just died. Your nephew claims you promised that after your death he could keep the prized classic car you kept in his garage. But your daughter and son-in-law are now threatening to take him to court unless he hands back the keys.

Ugly feuds between relatives grappling over inheritances is the stuff of soap operas. In real life, the beneficiaries of a will are rarely unprincipled vultures. Usually they just want to make sure a loved one's last wishes are carried out. But complications can arise after you die, so it is important to choose the right person as executor of your will.

Deciding just who that should be is not

easy. The last thing you want is to burden the people you care about most with a protracted and complicated task when they're grieving.

The alternative is to appoint a professional – usually a bank or an individual solicitor. But letting these professionals siphon away some of your beneficiaries' inheritance in fees hardly seems kind either.

Many of the big names in banking are only too willing to act as executors. The appeal of appointing a bank to manage your affairs is in the institution's impartiality and trustworthiness, bankers say. If you feel your relatives are likely to squabble over your will, it might be easier to appoint a disinterested party as executor, rather than one of the beneficiaries themselves.

"People want the reassurance that things will be managed strictly according to their wishes," says Michael Bird, head of client services at Barclay Trust. Also, a bank can easily be sued if it makes a mistake.

But the service is far from free. Banks' charges are based on time spent but on the value of the estate, and fees can eat up a sizeable chunk of the money you leave behind. On an estate worth £100,000,

Lloyds Bank would charge £3,000 to act as executor, and add service fees on top of this depending on how many assets and debts are involved.

The Royal Bank of Scotland would charge £4,000, but says it may vary these fees, charging more for a complex task or less for a simple one – particularly where the main asset is a house in which a surviving husband or wife will continue to live.

You can name a solicitor as your executor. In many cases, rather than claiming a percentage of the value of the estate, solicitors acting as executors will charge for the work involved. This makes it harder to gauge exactly how much the fees will be, but with a simple will it could be cheaper.

Julian Korn, partner at City solicitors Beachcroft Stanleys, recently charged £750 plus VAT for acting as executor of a £90,000 estate which had about three assets. If an estate of the same size had been complicated, this could have been as much as £3,000 to £4,000, he says.

But this is assuming the high hourly rates charged by central London firms. In the country, fees could be half these levels.

"Banks are likely to be less flexible than individuals, and they have charging

structures which can be on the heavy side," Mr Korn says.

Apart from the cost, grieving relatives may find banks upsetting to deal with, says Tom Lemon, senior partner at Ealing-based solicitors Prince Evans. "The banks can be very impersonal... and you don't get the feeling that they are involved," he says. Having a named solicitor as executor can help. "It's comforting to the individual to be able to sit for 20 minutes and talk about the person who has just died," Mr Lemon says.

But solicitors agree there's often no real advantage in naming a solicitor as executor. It could be better to appoint a close relative or friend as lay executor, who can in turn enlist a solicitor's services at the time if they feel they can't do it on their own.

This could even be cheaper, as it enables the lay executor to shop around when the time comes, and to do a portion of the work themselves. "A lot of people do find, when they are grieving, they don't want to be faced with a constant stream of letters – they would rather pass it on to someone else," says Mr Lemon.

But Peter Rodgers, who works in the City, acted as executor of his father's will 18 months ago and found having the extra

work to do at a time of grief was not unwelcome. "It was rather a useful way of keeping my mind occupied," he says.

He found the task straightforward, and reckons he spent two days in total doing it. "With a simple will where there is a relatively small amount of money and it's to be distributed among a small number of people – it's a simple process," he says. Mr Rodgers said he borrowed a book on how to be an executor. The main obstacle was getting the right forms from the probate office at Somerset House, though once he had them, he found they were very good and clear.

When you make a will you have to name between one and four executors. If you appoint two or more, this provides protection if one turns out to be unreliable, as decisions have to be made unanimously.

You should consider the following before naming someone: Is this person honest? Have they agreed to do the job? Are they likely to be around after you die?

Law Society: 0171-242 1222. Prince Evans: 0181-567 3477. Lloyds Bank: 0171-626 1500. Barclay Trust: 0171-403 4833. Beachcroft Stanleys: 0171-242 1011.

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Naomi Campbell for tea

12/GAVIN GREEN
London is not Frankfurt

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The spoils of a passionate collector: Decanters from the Parkington Collection, which is being auctioned on 16 and 17 October



Glass that's a cut above the rest

Michael Parkington was charming, witty, cunning and egotistical – according to both friends and rivals. He was also one of the world's foremost glass collectors. As the fruit of his mania goes under the hammer next week, John Windsor previews the auction.

Even if you cannot attend the sale, be sure to buy a catalogue for South Ken's auction of the highest-ever private collection of British art glass, a comprehensive 525 lots spanning three centuries. Complete with post-sale price sheet it will be an invaluable market guide, especially to the largely uncharted later Victorian engraved glass.

The glass collector Michael Parkington, who died in 1994 aged 71, was a solicitor who developed a passion for British glass while in South Africa defending Nelson Mandela on treason charges in the early Sixties. He was a towering figure, charming, witty and cunning and was an insatiable buyer who paid dealers top prices and intimidated glass enthusiasts in the saleroom.

The antique dealer Richard Dennis, Parkington's London buying agent, says: "The sale catalogue will be a marker; traders will say: 'Look, it's £600 in Parkington – I'll let you have it for £500'." It is Parkington's taste for 19th century names such as Varnish and Apsley Pellat and 20th century names such as Monart (including Ysart paperweights), Gray-Stan and Stuart – none of them well known at street level – that will be under scrutiny at the auction next Thursday (2pm) and Friday (10.30am).

During his lifetime Parkington single-handedly pushed up prices for Scottish Monart glass of the Thirties – mostly colourful vases with abstract swirls and unusual textures – and the sale should push them up further. Jane Hay, head of Christie's South Ken's glass department, watched him bid what she thought were crazy prices for Monart in the Eighties. In the sale, Ms Hay has estimated at only £600-£700 a lot of four miniature ovoid Monart vases, for just one of which he paid £330 six years ago. And she has put a cautious £300-£400 on a Gray-Stan orange oval vase of about 1935 for which he bid £1,430 in 1990. Comeuppance? Come on, more likely.

Parkington's squandered away his trophies in his mansion flat in Kensington, which Ms Hay describes as "ceiling to floor with glass, glass spilling out of every cupboard, and with narrow, 16 inch pathways between the stacks of glass on the floor". When Parkington discovered Whitefriars glass in 1991, after prompting from Ms Hay, it "spread like a fungus throughout the flat" – he bought about 400 pieces in eight months. Visitors were expected to put back his Ysart glass paperweights facing the same way, in their original ring of dust. These, with their embedded flowers, butterflies and fish, were another discovery of his. He would pay £200-£300 for a British Ysart. The 33 in the sale are estimated mostly £100-£200 or £500-£700. Watch them take off.

INTERNET INVESTOR

ROBIN AMLÖT

Home in on the Web

So you are moving. More of us are, or so it would seem from the statistics put forward about the housing market. Moving home is one of the most stressful things you can do. Technology is supposed to make our lives easier.

So, can the technology of the Internet and the World Wide Web take some of the stress out of house-hunting and mortgage-seeking?

Maybe. As with most developments on the Internet, a glance at what is happening in the USA shows what is likely to be the way forward. Already, across the Atlantic, around 70 per cent of all residential properties up for sale are listed on the Internet.

We are not there yet. But, if you are moving some distance, the Web may be a good place to start looking before you start driving round estate agents. Even if you are intending to stay within a few miles of where you already live, it is worth checking out. It may save some petrol and footslogging.

So what's available online? The Guild of Professional Estate Agents has a site called property-platform which allows you to search by region and then by town. It then displays pages similar to those in property magazines, with photographs and brief descriptions of the properties. However, there is no detailed property search facility on the site.

Internet Property Finder includes most of the upmarket national agencies such as Knight Frank and Savills but carries only a limited selection of properties.

Woolwich Property Services was the first large estate agency chain to put properties on the Net. However, the Woolwich's Property Seeker again only has a selection, rather than the full range on the Woolwich's books.

Only just over a month ago, the National Association of Estate Agents launched PropertyLive. It currently has details on just over 1,000 properties but aims to carry information on 50,000 within the year. In addition, it has ambitions to link up to government databases allowing you to check out schools, hospitals and other local amenities.

There are a number of other websites which have only a few hundred properties at best. Most of the sites on the Net allow you to search their databases by several criteria: type of property (house, bungalow, flat, etc), number of bedrooms, price range and location.

If you are looking for a property right now, you may strike it lucky and find the home of your dreams on the Web but, in all likelihood, given the limited nature of what is available at present, you probably won't. What you will get though, is an idea of what sort of house you can expect to get in the location you are looking for and for the price you can afford.

A few years into the future and the Web is likely to be the first place everybody will look for a new home, and it won't just be a case of reading how many "beds", "receptions" and "bathrooms". You should, quite soon, be able to take a virtual tour of properties. It won't be a computer simulation or a collection of photographs – at least one site already offers this facility – but a digital video walk-through.

Woolwich Property Services: www.wps-property-seeker.co.uk
Guild of Professional Estate Agents: www.property-platform.com
Internet Property Finder: www.propertyfinder.co.uk
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your pension to pay off the loan.

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Ally Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	12.9%	£185.73	£187.58
Alliance & Leicester	0.80 21.63 12.95	12.9%	£185.73	£187.58
Bank of Scotland	0.80 21.63 12.95	12.9%	£185.73	£187.58

CREDIT CARDS

Telephone	Card Type	Min. Income	Rate %	APR %	Annual Fee	Int. free period
STANDARD						
Capital One Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	12.9%	£185.73	£187.58	£185.73	£187.58
Co-operative Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	12.9%	£185.73	£187.58	£185.73	£187.58
Robert Fleming Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	12.9%	£185.73	£187.58	£185.73	£187.58
GOLD CARDS						
Co-operative Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	12.9%	£185.73	£187.58	£185.73	£187.58
Co-operative Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	12.9%	£185.73	£187.58	£185.73	£187.58
Amex Express	0.80 21.63 12.95	12.9%	£185.73	£187.58	£185.73	£187.58

STORE CARDS

Telephone	Payment by direct debit	Payment by other methods	% PA	APR	% PA	APR
STORE CARDS						
John Lewis	0.80 21.63 12.95	12.9%	£185.73	£187.58	£185.73	£187.58
Marshall & Spencer	0.80 21.63 12.95	12.9%	£185.73	£187.58	£185.73	£187.58
Sainsbury	0.80 21.63 12.95	12.9%	£185.73	£187.58	£185.73	£187.58

A - Minimum age 22 yrs. Holders of comprehensive motor insurance policy or lender's selected customers.
APR - Annual percentage rate.
AGU - Accident, sickness and unemployment insurance.
B-D - Buildings and contents insurance.
E - Higher rate applies if insurance not arranged.
LTV - Loan to value.
MIP - Mortgage interest premium.
N - Introductory rate for a limited period.
U - Unemployment insurance.
All rates subject to change without notice. Source: MONEYFACTS 01892 500677 9th Oct 1997

BEST SAVINGS RATES

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
INSTANT ACCESS					
Mutual Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1	4.21%	Year
Clydesdale Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1	6.50%	Day
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	6.25%	Year
Lloyds Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£2,500	4.95%	Year
INSTANT ACCESS POSTAL ACCOUNTS					
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1	6.50%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Lloyds Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£2,500	7.05%	Year
First National Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£5,000	7.45%	Year
NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS					
Lloyds Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	30 Day	£1,000	7.25%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	40 Day	£1,000	7.30%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	50 Day	£1,000	7.35%	Year
Lloyds Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	60 Day	£1,000	7.40%	Year
CHEQUE ACCOUNTS					
Mutual Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£2,500	6.25%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	6.50%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	6.50%	Year
Lloyds Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	6.45%	Year

FIXED RATE BONDS

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
FIXED RATE BONDS					
Mutual Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.25%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.40%	Year
Lloyds Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.30%	Year

FIRST TESSAS

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
FIRST TESSAS					
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year

FOLLOW-ON TESSAS

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
FOLLOW-ON TESSAS					
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (NET)

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (NET)					
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year

OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS (GROSS)

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS (GROSS)					
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year

NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (GROSS)

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (GROSS)					
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year
Barclays Bank	0.80 21.63 12.95	Instant	£1,000	7.00%	Year

All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice. Source: MONEYFACTS 01892 500677 9th Oct 1997



Looking for the gold fields of eastern Europe

Investors are always looking for the new frontier, where gold nuggets lie around waiting to be picked up by the adventurous and far-sighted while their duller brethren struggle to make a living in markets which have been well-worked over.

The current search for Eldorado has switched to Russia and eastern Europe, reports Clifford German.

way on to world markets with cheap hi-tech goods. That too ended in tears. But hope springs eternal and investors are now asking if Russia and eastern Europe will generate maximum returns for minimum risk. Communism had many faults but it did at least ensure that Russia, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic have literate, skilled and urban labour forces, and while Russia has massive natural resources the eastern European countries have the promise of early entry to the European Community. The transition to capitalism has been fairly bumpy, with high inflation, rising unemployment and falling output, unpaid wages, piecemeal privatisations and uncertainty over who has legal title to many assets. Things are still quite chaotic but some sort of order does seem to be emerging. Inflation is coming down, public sector deficits are coming under control and output is recovering.

Stock market values are still tiny in relation to the annual output of the economies and even though most markets are dear in relation to company profits, they are cheap relative to the assets which back them. But not everything is simple or easy. While the Moscow and Budapest markets have been soaring in the past year, average market prices in Warsaw, Prague and Bratislava are exactly where they were three years ago. Setbacks can be sudden, sharp and out of all proportion to the fundamentals. Something quite minor and apparently irrelevant can trigger heavy selling. Political, social, legal and economic risks are far greater than at home. There is a large criminal element among the *nouveaux riches* entrepreneurs especially in Russia, who think nothing of using fraud and extortion rather than technological and managerial expertise. Buying shares in individual

companies is a mug's game, but the first trust accessible to small investors was launched this week by Save & Prosper. The minimum investment is £2,000 or £35 a month. It will invest initially in up to seven separate markets across the region with a maximum of 30 per cent in Russia. Even Save & Prosper recommends it should be only 5 per cent of your investment portfolio. The nominal dividend yield on the initial portfolio will be a derisory 0.4 per cent, and charges are not cheap. At any one time you would have to pay 5.5 per cent more to buy units than the price you would get for reselling, and there is an annual charge of 1.5 per cent as well as expenses, initially a touch over 0.25 per cent. But there is always the hope that these markets will come good in a big way, and rewards as well as charges will be substantially greater, far greater, than the more sedate western markets could deliver.

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£50,000-£99,999	7.70%	7.49%
£25,000-£49,999	7.65%	7.44%
£10,000-£24,999	7.55%	7.34%
£5,000-£9,999	6.05%	5.93%

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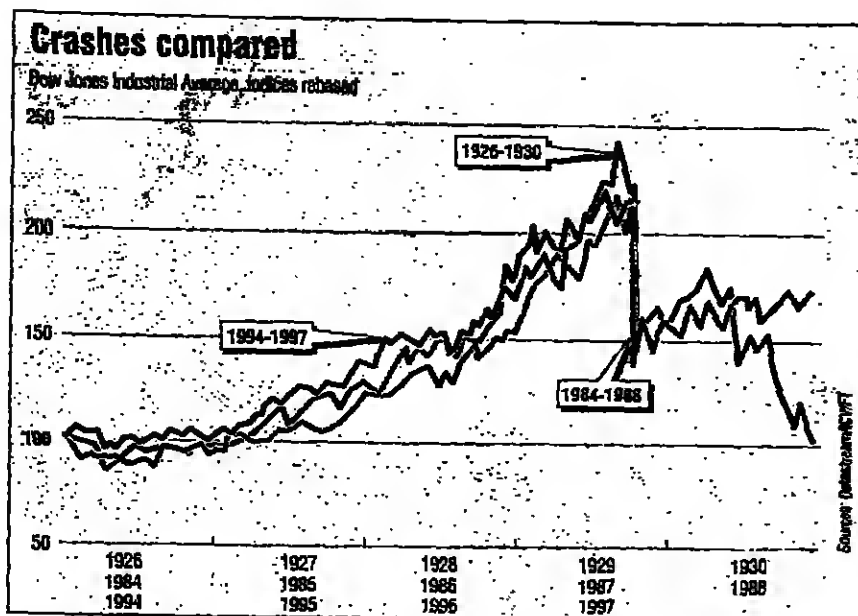
BUYING SHARES IN INVESTMENT TRUST COMPANIES

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THE JONATHAN DAVIS COLUMN

When will the Dow peak?



One week to go to the 10th anniversary of the stock market crash of 1987, and even the chairman of the Federal Reserve seems determined not to let the anniversary pass without reminding us once more – and with justice – of the limits of rationality in the stock market.

Ten months ago Alan Greenspan caused a nasty bout of jitters in the markets by warning investors of the dangers of "irrational exuberance". Whatever his intentions, the warning has done little since to stop the market in its tracks. The Dow Jones index is up 25.5 per cent so far this year, after 26 per cent last year.

For much of this year the world's most powerful central banker has seemed on occasions to be flitting instead with the market bulls, debating out loud whether there is any evidence to support the view that something new and profound – a "paradigm shift", in the current market parlance – has taken place in the US economy to justify keeping share prices so high.

Has the rapid spread of microchip technology over the last few years made the business cycle redundant? After six years of expansion in the US economy, some would like to think so. Has there been an unprecedented step change in the productivity of American business? There is not much evidence of it in the standard numbers, but something must explain why unemployment continues to fall so sharply without yet rekindling inflation. Or is it simply that the great inflation bogey of the post-war years has been slain once and for all?

That would certainly help to explain why long-term interest rates, which ultimately drive share price values, continue to fall, and why markets continue to take such a benign view of the future.

Look, for example at the prices of the index-linked bonds which the US government has started to sell to investors for the first time this year. According to BZW, the break-even inflation rate on the latest issue is a little over 3 per cent: in other words, the inflation guarantee that the bonds provide relative to conventional bonds will prove redundant only if average inflation remains below that figure over the next five years. Such calculations

would have seemed outlandish even five years ago, so rapidly have inflation expectations changed.

Yet, testifying this week to the House of Representatives Budget Committee, Mr Greenspan wisely reverted to his previous stance, observing that: "Financial markets seem to have priced in an optimistic outlook, characterised by a significant reduction in risk and an increasingly benevolent inflation process."

He added that it was "unrealistic" for investors to expect a repeat performance of the dramatic surge in Wall Street which has been seen over the past two years. His argument was that demand for labour is growing so fast at a time when unemployment is already so low that the point when either economic growth or inflation has to give cannot be far away.

Either way it must eventually rebound into lower share price valuations. That does not mean there has to be another crash to allow the markets' rosy view of the world to come back into line with underlying economic reality. A sudden 20-25 per cent fall in share prices, like 10 years ago, is just one option: it could be, and with any luck will be, a far more gradual process. But it may do no harm to prepare yourself for such an event. The prudent, I would suggest, should already be mentally knocking around 20 per cent of the value of their shareholdings to get a fairer feeling for their worth.

It may be no accident that Goldman Sachs, probably the most powerful of all the American investment banks, has been circulating a graph which shows how unreasonably the market's performance over the last three years has tracked that of the market in both 1926-29 (the three years which preceded the 1929 market crash) and 1984-87 (the three years running up to the crash of 10 years ago). The *Financial Times* carried a similar graph earlier this week, and neatly summarised the main economic reasons why the bull market has now run ahead of all realistic expectations of what the economy, on which the stock market's value ultimately depends, can deliver.

The main question investors face is what they can, or need to, do about it all. Sell all your shares in the hope of buying them back later more cheaply? No, that would be a quite exaggerated response. As I have said before, the markets may well go higher before they do eventually correct: irrationality by definition

is unbounded, and history suggests that smart investors make their money by riding the bull waves when they happen, and not trying to second-guess the turning points. The corollary is: don't panic when the setbacks happen.

Better is to keep a sense of proportion. In retrospect, the 1987 crash, unlike its counterpart in 1929, was something of a red herring. The market, having overreached itself, simply resumed its long upward trend from a new and more realistic base. There was no underlying change in economic circumstances to justify a permanent change in market valuations, as there was in both 1929 and 1974.

With luck we are in the same boat now as we were in 1984, rather than in the other cases. What we do understand now a lot better than we did before is how market crashes occur. Reflecting on the lessons of the South Sea Bubble in the early 18th century, Sir Isaac Newton said: "I can calculate the motions of the heavenly bodies, but not the madness of people."

Modern social science has allowed us a greater insight into the irrationality of collective behaviour. We now understand what is called the fallacy of composition: how a collection of individuals, each acting rationally by their own lights, can nevertheless, collectively, produce an outcome that none of them desires. The standard example is a fire in a cinema: if everyone tries to be first to reach the exit at the same time the result can be catastrophic. This is very much what seemed to happen in 1987, when computer-driven portfolio insurance programmes encouraged an ordinary market downturn to develop into a self-feeding downward spiral.

Mr Greenspan knows well that the world's stock markets are large and dynamic networks driven each day by millions of independent individual decisions. No computer system can begin to model what the collective effect of these individual decisions is likely to be: the process is iterative rather than linear.

The truth is that financial markets are inherently volatile and unstable. That is why we will go on having market booms and crashes – and why reason can only ever take you part of the way towards formulating a coherent investment strategy. The final paradox may be that the more people accept that cycles of overvaluation and crash are inevitable (as in 1987), the less likely they in fact become.

MUTUALS PAY OUT

Windfall bonanza from Down Under

While Northern Rock shareholders are still wondering what to do with their windfalls, a new bonanza is opening up for holders of policies with mutual insurance companies.

Next week 1.1 million Scottish Amicable members will get almost £1,000 from the Prudential's successful bid for the company in February. About £550 will be cash and the balance will be added to policies.

In mid-January an estimated 171,000 holders of policies with London Life and Australian Mutual Provident will get an average of £3,000 in free

shares if 75 per cent of members voting in next month's special meeting back the society's conversion into a limited company.

Policyholders will receive a voting form to send back by 18 November. If the vote is carried, eligible policyholders, which means those with current policies on 11 December last year and 10 September this year, will receive a minimum 100 shares.

They will also get extra shares based on the amount of money they have contributed and the length of time the policy has been running.

AMP's advisers believe the

shares would be worth the equivalent of 47p each if they were trading now, so the minimum windfall will be £470. The maximum could reach £8,000.

The shares will begin trading on the Australian and New Zealand stock exchanges around the middle of next year. One important detail is still missing. There are no plans to have them quoted in London, and no proposals to set up a dealing service for UK investors who would prefer cash. Last month the proportion of Northern Rock shareholders who took the money was 43 per cent.

A similar proportion of AMP shareholders might prefer cash upfront. AMP may have to buy back up to half its UK members' shares at a cost of £250m, or seek a London listing.

AMP wants to expand in the UK and sees a share quote as a way of funding acquisitions through a share offer or a rights issue. One can buy and sell Australian and New Zealand shares priced in local dollars here in the UK but the shares would be more marketable here if they were actually listed in London and priced in pounds sterling.

— Clifford German

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STOCK MARKET MADE SIMPLE

Share in an instant portfolio

Investing in a broad range of companies reduces the risks associated with buying shares, for those that do well will, one hopes, make up for those that do not. However, it is important to remember that it does not eliminate the risk. If the stock market generally falls so does the value of a portfolio.

Because of minimum charges for buying and selling, small individual shareholdings are not an economic proposition. The minimum investment should ideally be £2,000. However, there is a way of securing an instant portfolio: a unit trust.

The concept is simple. Investors' funds are pooled and divided into a number of units, each investor receiving a number of units in proportion to their investment. Typically, an equity-based trust will invest in the shares of 50 to 100 companies with no single holding exceeding 10 per cent of the fund.

Professional investment managers decide which shares to sell and which to add to the shareholding, with the aim of achieving the trust's objective. This may be to maximise income, the growth in value of the units, or a combination of the two. The investments are held in the name of an independent trustee (hence the name unit trust) who is responsible for ensuring there is no foul play.

Unit trust managers generally cover their expenses and make their profits in two ways. The "initial charge" is added to the price at which investors buy units from the unit trust managers. There is also an annual management charge, up to 1.5 per cent of the total value.

There are over 1,500 unit trusts in the UK. They are divided into a number of categories according to their aims and the geographic area in which the funds are invested. For example, there are trusts which just invest in the UK with a view to achieving growth, income or a combination of the two aims. Others invest internationally. Some trusts are far riskier than others.

For this reason, first-time investors should only con-

sider more general unit trusts such as "balanced" or "managed" funds which invest in bonds and cash as well as shares. Alternatively, consideration should be given to "tracker" funds which invest in the 100 largest companies in the UK.

As Anne McMechan of the Association of Unit Trusts and Investment Funds (Autif) states: "Unit trusts are absolutely ideal for the novice investor." However, do remember that not all unit trusts perform the same. Past performance tables are found in *Money Management* and *What Investment?*, available monthly from the larger newsagents.

The tables show how much an initial investment of £1,000, made at different periods in the past, is worth today if its net income has been reinvested. Ideally pick a fund which shows a consistent performance over all periods – and the longer the better. Do not pay too much attention to those which have done well in the past year as this may be a fluke.

Also, do not be influenced by the excellent performance of a trust in a different category to the one at which you were originally looking, as it could be a riskier investment and not meet your requirements. Never forget that past performance is no guarantee of the future.

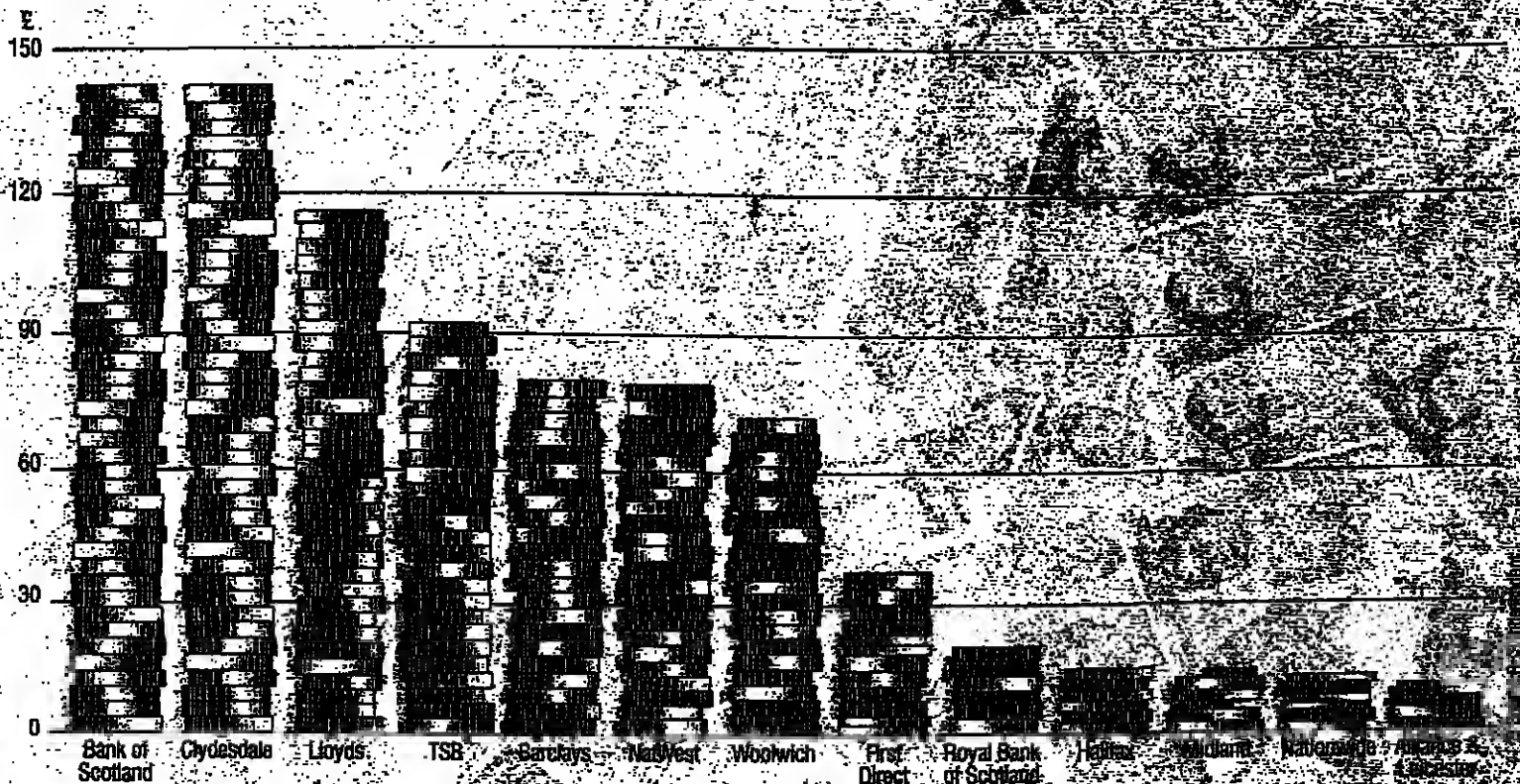
The previous day's buying and selling prices, as well as yields – which is the pre-tax income expressed as a percentage of the previous day's buying price – are published in *The Independent*. Most trusts have a minimum investment of £500 or £1,000. It is often possible to invest a regular sum each month. Payments start from £30 to £50. Spreading the acquisition in this way is an excellent way of making a first step into the stock market.

— John Andrew

A pack on unit trust investment is available from Autif. It includes the 'User's Handbook', giving guidance on how investors should select a trust and also contains a glossary of terms. Call 0181-207 1361.

Red all over: The huge cost of agreed overdrafts

Annual cost of an authorised overdraft of £500, used for one week every month



Overdraft battle on the high street

Once upon a time, you simply accepted that the price of going overdrawn, even if by agreement, would be a whopping rate of interest – plus an additional monthly fee of anything up to £10.

Today, that picture is changing. But some customers will pay a heavier price, as Andrew Verity reports.

"Royal Bank of Scotland unleashes guerrilla assault on 'harbingers of doom' – shock." Though the headlines were not quite as dramatic as the one above, the bank's recent initiative on overdrafts marks a new stage in the battle for customers.

The attack on so-called "harbingers of doom" was aimed at senior bankers from Clydesdale Bank, RBS's local rivals, whose own soothsayers are forecasting the demise of free banking within the next few years.

Royal Bank disagrees. Instead of accepting defeat on this front, it has taken its fight for free banking into territory dear to the hearts of students, loss-making small businessmen and recent divorcees: overdraft fees.

From 1 December, all account holders have the chance to slip comfortably into overdraft with no arrangement fee or monthly service charge – just a relatively reasonable rate of interest, 1.25 per cent a month.

The biggest change lies in the scrapping of a monthly fee – usually between £5 and £8 – still levied by most big banks on customers who go overdrawn, even when by agreement.

Pressing home the assault, the bank noted that for an authorised overdraft of £500 which is used

for one week every month, Lloyds Bank will take £116 from its customer, Barclays charges £90 and NatWest charges £79. Bank of Scotland believes it deserves a grand £142 for the service.

Royal Bank of Scotland will take a mere £20.71 – only beaten by Midland with £15.

Andy Marchant, head of current accounts at RBS, says: "Those who have forecast the end of free banking have completely misread the situation. Increased competition within the industry means that customers are receiving an even better deal."

"Most of our customers operate their current account within an agreed overdraft limit. We are recognising those customers who conduct their current account in a responsible manner and they will greatly benefit from our new policy."

Royal Bank's move runs against the grain of a convention in banking which is captured in the saying, "Owe a banker £5 and you are at his mercy; owe him £500m and he is at yours."

Traditionally, banks do not mind losing customers with piffing, unprofitable debts: if those customers stay, the interest paid may not cover the cost of servicing the overdraft. So they charge high rates of interest and levy fees for the administration work of confirming the overdraft.

Even in Royal Bank's case, this approach has not been entirely abandoned. It has financed part of its cost-cutting by boosting fees for unauthorised overdrafts. These have charges which sound more familiar: fees of £15 a month. Interest is nearly double that of an authorised overdraft at 2.45 per cent, or a whopping 29.4 per cent APR a year. NatWest will hit savers with a £50 initial fee, interest at 33.8 per cent APR and a frightening daily fee of £3.50.

Other banks penalise unauthorised overdrafts in similar fashion. The reasoning behind the high

charges is that banks regard unauthorised overdrafts as an irritation.

They present a greater risk to the bank because they can no longer have confidence that their customers will not draw more than a pre-agreed amount. So every single transaction has to be monitored. Instead of a note on a computer file, the bank has to waste staff time in monitoring the accounts.

Lesson: get it authorised. If a similar overdraft has been arranged before, a simple telephone call will usually suffice.

Banks with high charges for authorised overdrafts have mounted something of a defence to the guerrilla tactics of Royal Bank and Midland. They point to what has become known as the "pink" or "buffer" zone, an automatic overdraft, usually of £100, which does not need to be authorised and involves no fees.

A spokeswoman for Lloyds TSB adds: "Charges and interest relating to overdrafts do not affect most customers as 70 per cent never go overdrawn."

"Overdrafts are a flexible form of borrowing which allow customers to dip in and out. The charges should be seen in the context of overall packages which include free in-credit banking and access to thousands of branches and ATMs across the country."

Here, Royal Bank is again injecting fresh competition into retail banking. Last week, it became the first traditional bank to offer its customers access to any of the 22,000 cash machines across the UK – free of charge.

So what lies behind this sudden burst of competitive fervour?

The answer lies in a fresh injection of energy to the banking sector – and a mushrooming number of new companies. Just when you thought the banking sector had been reduced

to four – Lloyds TSB, Midland, NatWest and Barclays – new players are rushing in.

Halifax, Alliance & Leicester, Abbey National, Northern Rock and others have entered the sector. Fresh from making themselves popular by converting billions of pounds of members' funds into cash handouts, they mean business. One in four current accounts are now held not with the traditional providers.

Instead monthly wages go into the former building societies or Midland's telephone banking arm. Even those which have stayed as mutual building societies, such as Nationwide, are fighting for the same business.

A quick look at the overdraft fees of the new banks casts a fresh light on Royal Bank's initiatives: it only looks cheap next to some of its traditional rivals. For an overdraft of £500 one week a month for a year, the same example as above, Halifax will charge just £15.47, Abbey National only £12.95, Alliance & Leicester has whittled it down to the cheapest rate of all – £10.96 (see table above).

But even the new banks will not take kindly to customers who bust their limits. If a customer incurred a £500 unauthorised overdraft for one week a month, Halifax would hit him for £222.10 over the year.

The traditional banks are trying to fight back without further painful cost-cutting by offering enhanced service. Rather than slashing overdraft fees, Barclays prefers to do something which it points out could benefit all customers. It is piloting a new type of quarterly bank statement, tailored to each individual customer, to show all of their financial arrangements – mortgages, life assurance, pensions and credit cards – at a glance. So long as these arrangements are laid on by Barclays, of course. The big four high-street banks are determined, it seems, to fight back.

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Pension policies for women

The TUC is calling on the Government to set up a permanent telephone helpline providing advice for women on pensions after its own helpline was swamped by more than 100,000 calls in its first week. The line was kept open for a second week but only about

2,000 calls a week could be dealt with. For the TUC's factsheets, send a large stamped addressed envelope to: TUC Women and Pensions Factsheets, Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS. —Clifford German

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So you want to be a venture capitalist

The best-performing venture capital investment trust over the past five years is managed by Foreign & Colonial. So, as it happens, is the worst. Confused? Paul Slade has the answers.

If you had put £1,000 into F&C's Enterprise Trust at the end of August 1992, that money would now be worth £5,295. If, on the other hand, you had plumped for the same sector's East German trust – also managed by F&C – your £1,000 would now be worth just £180.

In fact, F&C took over the collapsing trust from German fund managers Ermagassen only earlier this year and is currently running it "for realisation". In other words, F&C has the thankless task of trying to extract what little cash remains for shareholders before winding up the trust altogether.

But these twin examples neatly sum up the two extremes of venture capital investment. Get it right, and the rewards are high – the top UK general investment trust's equivalent return was just £3,311. But get it wrong, and the results are disastrous.

F&C Ventures managing director James Nelson, who manages the Enterprise trust, says: "It's a different form of risk. We manage a more concentrated portfolio, so you haven't got as much diversification. But the other side of the coin is that we're investing in companies where we have direct contact with the managers and continuing monitoring throughout."

The Enterprise trust invests in about 60 companies, with its largest 10 stakes accounting for about 60 per cent of funds under management.

The higher degree of risk attached to venture capital investment led the last government to create a string of investment vehicles designed to

give tax breaks on money going into risky start-ups or expanding companies. The most recent of these schemes, created in 1993, is the venture capital trust.

But VCTs, like Business Expansion Schemes before them, were soon hedged round with all sorts of guarantees and clever financial gimmicks which meant well-off investors could get all the tax breaks at little or no risk. In his own first Budget, on 2 July, Gordon Brown announced that a crackdown on the schemes would take effect immediately, even though the new rules themselves will not be announced until next spring.

David Oliver, a tax partner at accountants Arthur Andersen, says: "We know that there are new rules coming in, and we know that we're in them already. We just don't know what they are."

Until the details emerge, Oliver's advice is to consider only those VCTs which have no outside underwriting or any form of guarantee. "It's got to be genuine risk capital money and, therefore, money which people can afford to lose," he says. "VCTs are really for the serious investor who has got significant assets. If I had £200,000 that I wanted to invest I might put, say, 10 per cent into a VCT. If £20,000 was all I had, I wouldn't put it in this sort of thing."

Other forms of venture capital investment, however, may be suitable for a small part of even the most modest investor's portfolio. In Nelson's own fund – which has a savings scheme starting at £25 a month – small investors now account for about 20 per cent of funds, against just 5 per cent two or three years ago.

Nelson says: "I think some people have got to the stage in assembling their portfolio, whether it's through PEPs or monthly savings schemes, where they've got all the more established or conventional funds, and are looking for something a little bit extra on the edge."

Venture and development capital investment trusts

Top Three	Bottom Three	
F&C Enterprise	Mercury Grosvenor	£2,089
Candover	Radiorust	£1,903
Electra	East German	£180

UK general investment trusts

Top Three	Bottom Three	
Finbury Trust	Edinburgh LK Tracker	£2,308
Mercury Keystone	Edinburgh Investment	£2,179
Finbury Growth	Murray Split Capital	£1,926

Performance over five years to August 29, 1997.
£1,000 invested, net income re-invested.

Source: Moneyfacts

Taking AIM for higher returns

The whole point of venture capital investment is to benefit from the fast growth of the fledgling companies which may become tomorrow's giants.

One company whose growth has been made possible by just such investment is Sanctuary Music Productions, home of acts like Love City Groove and Alexander O'Neal. SMP forms joint-venture record labels with talent scouts in a variety of pop music genres. The talent scouts find the acts, and SMP does the rest.

The company took a listing on the Alternative Investment Market (AIM) earlier this year, following its parent group successfully raising cash through a VCT. AIM is a market which allows smaller companies to raise funds from investors with fewer of the formal obstacles presented by a full Stock Exchange listing. Like other forms of venture capital investment, AIM's potentially higher returns come only at the cost of higher risk.

SMP's major shareholder is its parent group, which owns 60 per cent of the company. Institutions such as Invesco and Framlington also have a holding. Individual small investors own somewhere between 10 per cent and 15 per cent.

Sanctuary Group finance director Mike Miller says: "There are some wealthy individuals involved who we've met along the way. But there are also some private punters who came in, presumably because it's something a bit more interesting than a widget manufacturer."

The company's share price on AIM stood at 65.5p on launch, peaked at 75.5p and has since been hovering in the 67.5p to 70p range for the past couple of months. "We're slowly building," says Miller.

Many small companies unit or investment trusts include a few AIM shares. The SMP shares held by Framlington, for example, form part of the company's Framlington 1,000 Smallest Companies investment trust, which shows growth of 952 per cent over the past five years, placing it at number 19 in a sector of 43 trusts.



Coronation Street's Matthew Marsden won the best newcomer award this week. Sanctuary Music Productions (see below), whose parent company won the backing of a venture capital trust, hopes to launch him next on a career as a singer. Photograph: Granada

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THREE TO VIEW: WITH GOOD KITCHENS



The School House at Addington, Buckinghamshire has a 12ft 6ins kitchen with a one-and-a-half bowl white Shires sink, with mixer tap and lined oak units. There's a Bosch hob and Smeg double oven. The five-bedroom converted school house has a double height 33ft drawing room with the original school bell tower above. There is half an acre of gardens backing on to open countryside. Knight Frank is asking £400,000 (01865 790077).



Pont-y-Mwnyr Cottages at Llanferres, Denbighshire is a pair of cottages - one with two bedrooms, one with three, on the banks of the River Alyn 18 miles from Chester. The kitchens in both have Butler-style sinks with ash wood drainers to each side. The first cottage also has a cream oil-fired Aga and, in the drawing room, a wood-burning stove. Cottage two has a wood-pannelled drawing room. Outside, there is a sunken terraced rose garden. Price for the pair is £225,000 says Strutt & Parker (01244 320747).



Smithy Cottage near Blandford Forum in Dorset has a 13ft kitchen fitted with wooden-fronted units, double-bowl stainless steel sink unit and built-in hob, fridge and double oven. There is a water softener for drinking water, wine store and walk-in larder. The thatched four-bedroom house has a wood burning stove in the sitting room, an office/studio and triple garage. For sale through GA Town & Country for £235,000 (01258 453711).

THAT WAS THEN. THIS IS NOW

Searching for a little place in the country? Good luck

Demand is once again high for cottages in the Home Counties but, as Penny Jackson discovers, quality, location and amenities are key factors in successful sales, and the second-home/commuting lifestyle is not to everyone's taste

A Home Counties estate agent the other day was lamenting the fact that he had to turn down a cash buyer for his own house because he could find nothing he liked. In his frustration, he said, he could understand why someone would pay well over the asking price when the right house finally came along.

But these inflated prices are not typical of the country market as a whole but rather an extension of the demand from London for period family homes.

They go for high prices because there aren't many of them and the competing buyers are probably using the proceeds of a London sale or can even afford to buy out of their salaries. If you are selling a Georgian rectory you could be excused from believing that there's a property boom. Other people see a rather more cautious market.

Take an area like the South Hams in Devon, for instance. Normally October is a busy period as people return after the summer having decided to move there permanently or to buy a second home.

However, Madeline Marchand of Marchand Petit, is seeing a great deal of activity but not many deals. The story is familiar - nobody, it seems, wants to take second best. "If the market were really buoyant and strong, they would," she says. "Whether it's roses round the door, a lovely apartment, or simply good parking, virtually no one will compromise whether it is a second or main home. Only the waterside properties have really jumped ahead. Generally Devon has not returned to its Eighties peak."

So what has happened to the fortunes of the small country cottage, the second homes that were snapped up like trophies during the Eighties? In the Cotswolds, tra-



Mary Humphries' cottage in Kingston Lisle, Oxfordshire: she and her family are finally packing up after 11 years

Photograph: John Lawrence

ditionally prime territory for the second home-owner, Diane Means of Hamptons International, sees £100,000 to £150,000 as still the maximum most want to pay.

"If people pay a lot for a second home, you usually find they spend a great deal more time there than just weekends and they may only have a flat in London," she

says. "Families are not as keen, though, as they were on second homes and would rather spend more on their main house."

Sue Bond bought her 18th-century weaver's cottage in Sheepcote, Gloucestershire when she was single. Now, 10 years on and with two children she is selling. "You have to be regimented if you are

to get the most out of the weekend, but it was always worth it. A local girl looked after my horse which she would hand to me as I gave her the baby." Her cottage, on the market with Hamptons for £125,000, earlier became the target of a fantasy buyer. "Surveys were done, time dragged on, but he never came up with the money."

Every summer estate agents are inundated with holiday-makers who say they want a permanent bolthole. Many fall by the wayside, but those who remain enamoured with the idea could do worse than buy now.

John D Wood's Newbury office finds commutability at the top of a buyer's wish list. "They know exactly where they

want to be," says Nick Hole-Jones. "Second home owners often use a small cottage as a toy for five years to test the water. They then might be somewhere larger or move into the country permanently. But they are very specific - quiet lanes, a pub, preferably a free house with decent food, and a small store."

Indeed, a two-bedroom thatched cottage with a small kitchen and inglenook fireplace is a romantic retreat until babies have to be accommodated. Mary Humphries and her husband have had their listed cottage in Kingston Lisle, Oxfordshire for 11 years, but now can't face the upheaval at weekends. "We tend to be more home-based these days. We will miss the walks and the village life but there does come a time with children when packing up the car on a Friday becomes more fraught even though it's an easy journey."

Perhaps the area that has seen the sharpest recovery in demand for cottages is Norfolk, specifically along the north coast. It has long been regarded as good value for money and since London prices have shot up, so has the competition heated up for the limited supply of traditional brick and flint cottages.

Michael Bedford, from the Burnham Market office of Bedfords, has an unprecedented nil supply on his books. "The last small cottage we had for sale had three people fighting over it. We have seen some crazy prices. A cottage on the market for £95,000 went well over the asking price in the end. People will wait for years for the right kind of cottage in a good location."

Generally, though, cottages which have risen in price by a modest 8 to 10 per cent in the last year have not kept pace with the increases of country houses of at least 20 per cent. Estate agents witnessing the inflated prices paid for family homes believe the potential of cottages with land are being overlooked. "If I were moving to the country that is exactly where I would be buying now," says Nick Hole-Jones.

Mary Humphries' cottage is for sale through John D Wood, Newbury office at a guide price of £130,000.

How to make fame come knocking at your (exquisite Georgian) door

Fancy having Naomi Campbell round your house and getting paid for it? For some, this is more than just a dream - as long as they are prepared to accept scores of other people also trailing through their homes on a location shoot. Greta Vedrickas takes out her clapperboard

Dave Bates did have Naomi Campbell round as a house guest but - sadly - he wasn't the attraction: his Chiswick house was. For Bates lives in a Norman Shaw designed home built in 1878.

Since registering his property with Lavish Locations his home has been used as a backdrop for commercials, television dramas and photo shoots. Production companies particularly like his 40ft by 20ft room at the top of the house which is more like a city loft.

Bates is proud of his home but claims to be unimpressed by stars. "I'm in the music business and know people like that anyway."

Mr and Mrs average may be more starstruck but would anyone want to film inside their home? Luke Jackson of Location Works says they would.

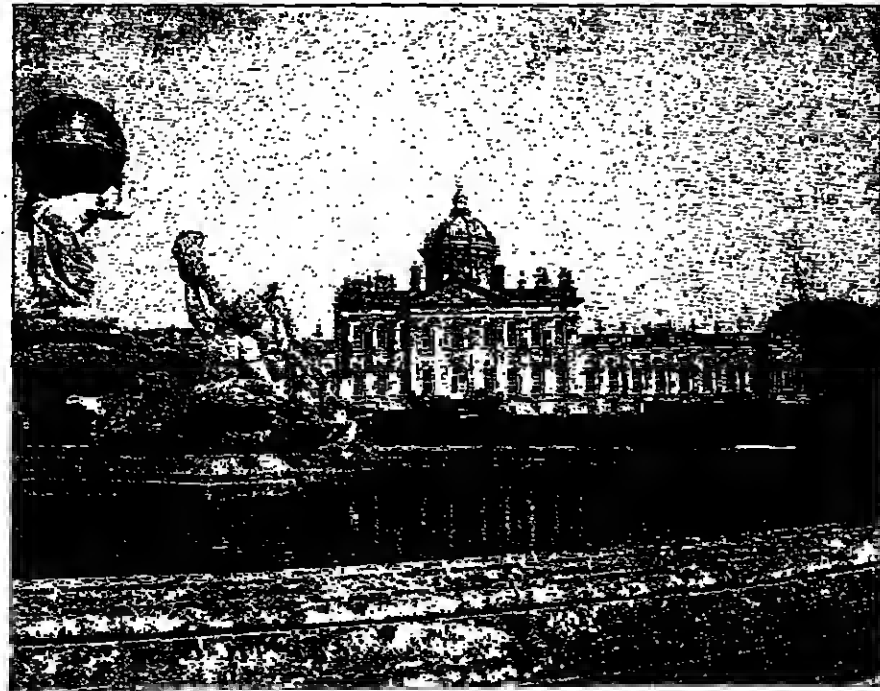
"We look for anything from a smart kitchen for an Oxo ad to a bog standard one for Bold. It depends what we need. We're looking for a flat with a rubbish chute coming out of it but haven't found one yet."

Margaret at the Location Company echoes the notion that an ordinary property can be as sought-after as a stately home but admits: "We do like large, aspirational properties with clean lines, wooden floors and preferably within the M25, but it's not just yuppie flats, we need boring little semis with privet hedges as well."

She warns that whatever type of home you have, space is vital. Film crews, photographic equipment and possibly caterers need room to manoeuvre. All agencies are loath to accept anywhere that appears cluttered.

But using your house as a location may not win you neighbour of the year award. Jackson cautions: "We tell clients to speak to their neighbours before filming starts. Otherwise people wake up at 7am to a street full of trucks, lights and a generator going and think, 'What the bloody hell's that?'"

Miles Ridley, who lives opposite the Greenwich house where the Mrs Merriot gas board ad was filmed recently, was incensed to find lights and a crew outside his window as he tried to eat lunch. "No, I wasn't



deeply bothered by the whole experience. In fact I was tempted to go out and have, as Mrs Merriot would say, a heated debate."

Because of past problems, the London Borough of Greenwich employs a film locations officer who liaises between anyone wanting to film and residents. Harvey Edgington took up his post after filming of *The Krays* caused inhabitants of a tiny street in a conservation area immense difficulties

with night shooting and severe parking congestion.

"Some people thought it was the best thing ever, others weren't too impressed at finding their front doors painted a different colour when they got home. Film crews now speak directly to me if they want the street lights off or bins collected that day."

In Greenwich, residents approach the borough direct. Officers take photos of your home for a database which film com-

panies can look at. Edgington negotiates fees, including one for the borough, and draws up the contract between the company and the resident.

Most agencies ask people interested in having their homes used for locations to ring before sending in photos. When an agency accepts photos of your home, details go on to a database for production companies to choose from. It's free to register but agencies charge between 10 and 15 per cent com-



Castle Howard, setting for 'Bridgeshead Revisited' with Antony Andrews and Jeremy Irons - but there is also a market for more humble film locations

able to compensate homeowners fully.

For most people things don't go wrong and nearly all are keen to loan their homes again. If you live in a large "aspirational" loft space in London you could find yourself very popular. But if the only remarkable feature of your home is a rubbish chute you may be luckier than you think.

Location Works 0171-494 0888; The Location Company 0171-637 7766; Lavish Locations 0181-742 2992; Location Wise 0171-603 5454; LB Greenwich Film Locations 0181-312 5662

So you wanna be in movies?

Speak to an agency first to see what they are looking for.

Send in a variety of photos making sure to emphasise space and avoiding clutter.

Decide if you are prepared to risk a film crew or prefer stills shoots only.

Check that any company using your home is adequately insured.

Warn your neighbours about any filming.

THE KITCHEN SINK

What the butler never saw

Cappuccino is to the kitchen sink what avocado is to the bathroom suite. So if you are the owner of a muddy beige sink, you are seriously out of date.

It could even affect your chances of getting the best price when selling your property. Almost every survey by estate agencies and mortgage lenders puts a designer-name kitchen at the top of a buyer's must-have list, after location, price and garage. It's one of the few improvements that pays for itself when you come to sell (unlike double glazing, or re-decorating in neutral shades).

According to the latest issue of *Which?* a new kitchen is one of the few house improvements to add value to a property. It is, after all, off-putting to view a house where the sink looks as though it's used regularly for cleaning paint brushes.

It may sound silly to regard the humble kitchen sink as a fashion statement. But it's no accident that estate agents throw in as many high-profile brand names as possible in sales details. Buyers like to think they're getting a classy product - even better, an expensive fitting that they haven't paid for themselves.

Carron Phoenix in Falkirk, Scotland, is one of Europe's leaders of kitchen sink dramas personae. One of their top of the range products sounds like a fitting Fred and Wilma Flintstone might have bragged about to their Stone Age neighbours:

a sink made from granite. The coloured quartz crystals are ground and bonded with 20 per cent acrylic resin, then, during manufacture, the crystals are forced to the surface, making the sink as hard as rock.

Dropping pots in it, pouring boiling water over it and clattering cutlery around in it will not cause stains or chips, the makers claim. It comes in a range of colours including slate grey and oatmeal-and-white.

In Savills' most recent survey of buyers, stainless steel was the most favoured kitchen sink finish. Polished Metal Products - which also produce the more traditional fireclay French farmhouse sinks - have just launched a new range of Soft Option stainless steel sinks, inspired by a Canadian design. They have an unusual, rolled edge which fits snugly under the surrounding surface and creates a waterproof seal.

Currently the hot favourite of developers fitting out high-priced warehouse conversions, the professional cook look matches stainless steel cupboards and cookers. Prices start at £195 for a small bowl and rise to £415 for a two bowl combination. Matching taps by Asquith, Philippe Starck and Diverso of Italy will add up to another £241, depending on finish and style.

Frankie (another estate agent buzz-word) have exploited the demand for purified water by producing a three-way



Added value: research shows that a fine kitchen is one of four major factors affecting the saleability of a house - after location, price and garage. Here, the Artisan Kitchen, by John Lewis of Hungerford

tap with an integrated water purification system.

The Triflow comes with a range of taps, including porcelain and Corian, to match the work surface. They also come in the currently popular pewter, and a two-tone nickel and gold. Prices start at £347. The company's corner sink designs, per-

fect for kitchens that have been squeezed into oddly shaped conversions, start at around £270.

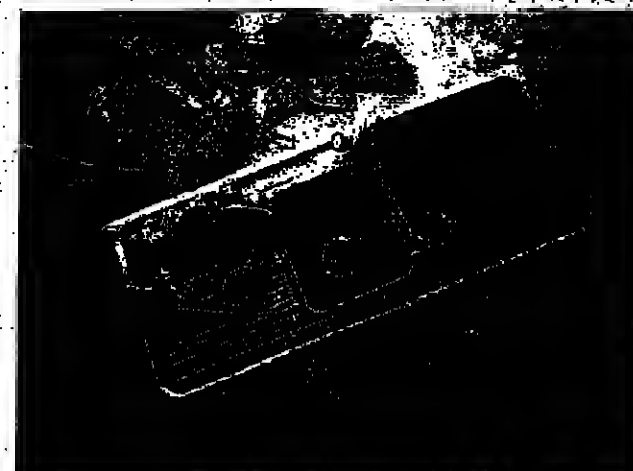
Bald UK make a range of integrated sink and worktops, which is handy if you want to replace the whole top of the unit without fiddling about cutting into an existing worktop. Prices

start at £58 a metre, plus VAT. But some people will always be unimpressed by high-tech sink think, and go for the traditional Belfast or butler sink.

The kitchen maker John Lewis of Hungerford says that the real Belfast sinks are too big and impractical, so he imports cast-iron sinks, coated in white enamel,

from America. They still look right for the period and come in three different sizes, starting at £245 plus VAT.

Brass and Traditional Sinks, which make traditional farmhouse, enamelled fireclay sinks, have developed French designs to suit the UK market. They also designed the New Yorker



Stone Age chic: Carron Phoenix's 'granite' sinks are made from quartz crystals bonded with resin



Cornered: Franke, ever popular with estate agents, produce a neat design for a limited space

- a double-bowl fireclay sink - for the American market, but it works just as well in a British kitchen. The French Farmhouse starts at £218, the New Yorker at £371. All the taps are British made.

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How the hard facts undermine the case for 'cut-price' loans

Nothing could be simpler than choosing a mortgage. You simply pick the lender offering the best interest rates on the market, right? Wrong: as Nic Cicutt explains, taking out a loan involves more than opting for the lowest headline rate.

The past few years have seen a dramatic increase in the number of different mortgages available to borrowers. Barely a week passes without at least 100 new loans hitting the market, replacing others – some available for only a few days – considered defunct by lenders.

Choosing between them has become a lottery, a problem compounded by the proliferation of deals where the small print becomes more important than the key advantages of what is on offer.

It is no surprise that many borrowers, both first-time buyers and – perhaps surprisingly – those seeking to re-mortgage are tempted by headline rates.

These are the "teaser" advertisements that promise an ultra-low annual percentage rate (APR) to borrowers. Yet anyone who wanders blindly into the maze could find themselves paying heavily for that special deal. Before deciding on the loan, there are several points to examine.

The first is that APRs, the supposedly cast-iron mechanism for telling whether one rate from another, may be no such thing. For example, many lenders calculate their APRs on

the assumption that the borrower will not necessarily revert to a standard variable rate at the end of the fixed or discounted period.

The result has been mounting confusion as lenders apply whatever figure they like in respect of what they assume borrowers will pay in the long term. It pays therefore, for borrowers to ask whether the APR relates only to the headline period or the full duration of the loan.

There are other issues to look at, one of them being the booking fee. Many lenders will charge £295 to arrange the mortgage. But some will levy £395, while a handful have been known to levy as much as £695. At that price, the rate on offer would have to be amazing for it to be worthwhile.

Alan Mudd, sales manager at John Charcol, the UK's largest mortgage brokers, warns of another potential sting in the tail: "Look at the headline rate, coupled with the tie-in period when redemption penalties apply. If you are looking to pay off part of your mortgage early, heavy penalties if you redeem in the first five years can be a sting in the tail you don't need."

Yet many lenders still continue with a policy that imposes five-year redemption charges – such as six months' worth of interest – even for a two-year fixed rate deal.

Mr Mudd adds: "Look very carefully at the rate that is being charged for cashback mortgages [where a percentage of the loan is given back to you in cash]. What tends to emerge is that you get charged a slightly higher rate for that cashback."

Jim Chadwick, marketing director at Barclays Mortgages, gives one example of the pressures involved in trying to offer a fair deal to borrowers on cashbacks: "There has been a conception that headline price equals 'best price', but with contractual lock-ins to the lender – sometimes for many years – the sting is in the tail."

"For a number of years we were caught in the trap. Simply, we were concerned that locking customers in to variable rates for long periods of time could be extremely dangerous to them, particularly if rates were to increase. We therefore set a limit of two years on lock-in period. But as returns from mortgages are driven by lock-ins this meant we could not offer the same levels of cashbacks and effectively withdrew from the price wars."

Interestingly, one recent study shows that over a five-year period between April 1992 and April 1997, a £60,000 mortgage would have cost £22,159 in interest payments with Barclays Mortgages, whereas the supposedly more competitive Nationwide, Britannia and Bradford & Bingley charged between £21,236 and £24,011 over the same period.

As the facts become clearer, customers have tended to look deeper for value, many now being prepared to use to Barclays for their loans.

Alan Mudd, at John Charcol, adds: "Borrowers should also look at the issue of compulsory insurances. Everyone needs insurance, but what I recommend is that people should shop around first and get the best quote for the best home and contents policy."



The nightmare you pay to avoid: many offers are linked to compulsory insurance – and the excessive price can make the whole deal a bad one

"Then, they should compare it to the cost of compulsory insurance on that attractive mortgage rate. Quite often you will find that what a lender will charge for compulsory insurance equates to 0.25 per cent on the mortgage rate." On a £60,000 interest-only loan, that means an extra £12 a month for 25 years.

John Charcol recommends that customers also check whether mortgage indemnity guarantees (MIGs), the insur-

ance levied from borrowers to meet sums owed in the event of default, are applied and what they are. Some lenders charge up to £1,000 more than others for the same-sized loan.

As suggested last week, it also pays to find out when capital repayments are deducted from the outstanding mortgage balance: monthly or daily. The monthly option can save £4,500 in interest payments on a typical £60,000 loan over 25 years.

Finally, Mr Mudd advises,

check the lender's track record: "If they lag behind everyone in lowering rates and race to raise them, borrowers will end up paying more, no matter what the headline rate."

Nic Cicutt, personal finance editor, has written a 27-page *Guide to Mortgages*, available free to readers of *The Independent*. The guide, sponsored by Barclays Mortgages, is available by calling 0800 583691. Or fill in the coupon on page 3.

— Clifford German

هكذا من الأصل



The Houses can sell a home

PENNY JACKSON

When it comes to selling in the Camberwell/ Brixton area, a brochure with a picture of the Houses of Parliament works a dream. A house owner having enormous difficulty in selling her quiet family house in the same neck of the woods off Myatt's Fields, a lovely but little-known park, was amazed at the success of St Gabriel's Manors advertising campaign.

She looked enviously as City workers snapped up the apartments in a converted Victorian college which sold heavily on being two miles from Westminster. In the meantime she was constantly having to explain to sceptical buyers that no they didn't have problems with Brixton, and Okay there were a few rough spots but all in all it was a very good area. Which is true, but it's galling for honest folk to find that buyers prefer to take the word of a developer.

The only thing that surprises Simon Coan of Winkworth, who knows the area well, and used to take his children to Myatt's Fields in preference to Battersea Park, is the prices people are prepared to pay in some south London developments.

And as soon as the words loft or split level are mentioned, buyers seem to lose all reason. "They come to us saying they have a lovely studio flat and want £130,000 for it, and I have to tell them, not in a million years. I always ask why they paid so much for it. As for the Far East buyers, they see a line saying 10 minutes by taxi to the West End and then pay through the nose."

At least the Far East investors who have just bought off-plan in Galliard Homes' Butlers Wharf development can pinpoint exactly where they are. Right on the waterside between the Design Museum and Pont de la Tour in what is now a car park. Spice Quay, a 92-apart-

ment block, according to the architectural drawings, will not be aping its warehouse neighbour, opting instead for glass balconies among other features. There is not much chance that buyers will do a White House (Galliard's enormously successful South Bank venture) and queue all night.

This Galliard and Frogmore development has sold so well in the Far East that only 23 apartments remain unsold. However, they expect nearly all of those to go to owner-occupiers since the rental yield on apartments that start in price at £400,000 is not high. A 1,900 sq ft duplex apartment over two floors is being sold for £850,000. Shops and restaurants are being built into the ground-floor scheme, and a new multi-storey car park is going up behind Butlers Wharf. Sales: 0181-508 8881

What can compare though with the restoration of the last of Regent's Park terraces? After four years of meticulous work, Cambridge Gate now houses a splendid 40-room mansion and 23 apartments.

No.1, the mansion, is a cool £15m and comes with its own bespoke Rolls-Royce Silver Spur as well as eight bedroom suites, six reception rooms, three kitchens, a library, study and orangery.

At 16,500 sq ft it is one of London's largest residences and is not short of useful little gadgets, like a glass-domed swimming pool which transforms into a ballroom at the press of a button.

Eleven of the apartments have been released in the first phase, the largest of which is more than 6,000 square feet.

Six apartments have already been sold to a mix of UK, American and Middle Eastern buyers.

Prices range from £1.9m to £3m. Agents are De Groot Colles: 0171-235 8090.

... but some of the mortgages on offer look very tempting

Now that the first round of conversions from building society to banks has come to an end with Northern Rock making the switch, all those borrowers who were locked in to existing lenders while awaiting windfalls are free to seek better deals. Abbey National's Autumn mortgage collection includes

fixed rates of 6.49 per cent for five years for borrowers who want less than 75 per cent loans to value, and 6.99 per cent for up to 95 per cent loans to value. Bonuses of up to £325 are available to cover survey fees but a booking fee of £250 and Abbey's own buildings and contents insurance are required, or

the rate goes up by 0.2 per cent. A three-year fixed rate of 6.45 per cent is available, and a 10-year rate of 7.59 per cent is available on loans up to 95 per cent of valuation, both with survey bonus, booking fee and insurance requirement attached. Fixed-rate loans until end-January 2001 are available with the

same trimmings and no lock-in period to follow on this one. Royal Bank of Scotland is offering 100 per cent loans at 7.79 per cent fixed for three years, 7.89 per cent fixed for five years and 8.39 per cent fixed for 10. Free unemployment cover is available for a year, while loans up to 95 per cent get lower

rates and four years' free cover. Nationwide is offering an innovative reducing fixed rate mortgage which starts at 8.29 per cent in year one, falling to 7.49 per cent, 6.99 per cent and then 5.99 per cent in year four, an average of 7.19 per cent. Capped mortgages, guaranteed not to exceed 8.99 per cent for

three years, are available without redemption penalties. FirstMortgage has launched a three-year discounted variable-rate mortgage starting at 5.95 per cent to complement its three-year 6.25 per cent fixed rate offer.

— Clifford German

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THE LONDON MOTOR SHOW

Not Frankfurt, but well worth a spin

We are on the verge of a new age in motoring, and the forthcoming London Motor Show will give punters a taste of what's in store. But in his preview of the show, Gavin Green suggests London may be a pale imitation of Frankfurt's more exciting display of new cars

That it is a mere taste, rather than a full-blown entrée, is a shame, and a reflection of London's lowly international status in the motor show food chain. Our fashion shows may now be world class, our motor shows aren't there yet.

Frankfurt last month was a breathtaking preview of frugal and imaginatively styled small cars, machines that are green and fun. Congested Britain needs such cars at least as badly as Germany. Yet only a sprinkling of the Frankfurt Show stars are crossing the Channel.

There is, for instance, no Smart Car, the ingenious little two-seater "city coupé" made jointly by Mercedes-Benz and Swatch, the watch people, which goes on sale in mainland Europe next spring. UK sales will probably start in 2000.

Nor is there the new Audi A2, precursor to a new baby Audi, also slated for the year 2000. With its lightweight aluminium body and direct-injection petrol engine it promises marvellous economy (well over 60mpg), as well as smile-a-mile driving. Instead Audi chooses to show a more powerful version of the handsome A4. This new S4 is hugely desirable. Yet it is an irrelevant cul-de-sac in the grand scheme of things. The A2 is the future.

We will not see the new Mini, unveiled to a select group at Frankfurt, before quickly disappearing again. That such a crucial new British car was shown in Frankfurt, but not in London, is a rude reminder of where the real power is wielded at BMW-owned Rover these days.

At least we'll see the new Mercedes A-class, 1997's most impactful car, and probably the greatest leap in small car design since the original Mini. There are so many clever ideas crammed into the A-class's Mini Metro length, not least a passenger compartment as big as a Ford Mondeo's. Independent tests have suggested that the A-class really is as safe as a bigger Mercedes saloon, an extraordinary achievement. UK sales start in June, and prices begin at about £13,500.

The brand new Golf is another Earls Court must-see. It is nothing like as radical as the A-class and, in the photos, looks like a timid makeover of the old model. Yet it is such a marvellously complete small hatch, better made and classier than the outgoing model, more entertaining to drive, yet reassuringly familiar to former



Clockwise from left: the impactful A-class Mercedes, a classy new Golf, the impressive looking Freelander, Land Rover's first ever 'lifestyle' small 4x4, and the new Astra.

Golfers. British sales start next spring but prices have already been announced: they start from £11,970 - excellent value. The GTi will cost £15,515.

The new Vauxhall Astra also looks impressive, if conservative. As with the Golf, much is being made about its safety offerings (in Germany, even side airbags are standard). Vauxhall is also playing up its driver appeal, an aspect of the current Astra which is distinctly underwhelming. Lotus has been drafted in to give the new model some suspension finesse.

Also in the small hatchback class, Citroën unveils its new challenger, the Xsara. If you ignore the anonymous looks and the pedigree of the badge, the Xsara is actually a likeable thing. It's roomy, rides with commendable suppleness and has the odd innovative flourish to keep the Citroën flame burning, albeit dimly. It replaces the ZX, and goes on sale next month.

Apart from the A-class, the star of the show is probably the new Land Rover Free-

lander, the Solihull maker's first-ever small "lifestyle" 4x4. This class has bred some naff cars in the past, yet the Freelander promises to be rather different. It looks imposing (4x4s invariably do) without being too butch, and early impressions suggest a vehicle that's capable on both mud and motorways. The three-door rag roof model also promises to serve up some fun. Sales start in November. There's a choice of four-cylinder petrol or four-cylinder diesel models, neither of which should be too thirsty - unlike all other Land Rovers.

Just as important in the 4x4 market is the new Mercedes M-class, which also makes its British debut. This one targets the bigger Discovery sector, and is bound to give the ageing Disco and the equally arid Sogun a pummeling in the showroom. It's Mercedes' first-ever "luxury lifestyle" off-roader and is a sign of how this market continues to boom. The M-class, on the Benz stand, is part of a *Jurassic Park* The Lost World display, which sounds

like a good reason to avoid it. Don't the car is important, not least because it shows how manufacturers are continuing to diversify their model ranges. Mind you, another new Mercedes - the V-class people carrier - also provides a clear illustration of the dangers of

Mercedes' A-class is probably the greatest leap in small car design since the original Mini

diversification. This truck-like van is more a luxury minibus than a car-like MPV.

The prettiest model at Earls Court is probably the new Alfa 156, the Italian maker's most serious attempt yet to give the BMW 3-series and the Audi A4 a hard time in the small sports saloon market. It is quite gorgeous. V6 and tuneful four-cylinder en-

gines are on offer, and build quality looks to be very close to German levels. Sales start next spring.

Of technical interest is its diesel engine. It's the world's first production unit using new-fangled "common-rail" technology which, in a nutshell, means it's cleaner, faster and more frugal than diesel rivals. Other makers will follow this Fiat initiative, set to give a new lease of life to a type of engine which many thought (and hoped) was on its way out.

A final pick: make sure you see the new Porsche 911, which serves up the best driving experience you'll probably ever get. Sadly, few will ever get the chance. Just look at it, and dream. After all, for most of us, that's what motor shows are all about.

The London Motor Show, held at Earls Court, runs from 15-26 October, from 9.30am-7pm (9pm on 21.22.23 October, 6pm on 26 October). Entry £10 for adults and £6 for children under 15 and OAPs.

A-plus for this Alfa, as a classic comes back to life

There are more significant cars at the show, but for Gavin Green, who learnt to drive on a rusty Seventies Alfased, the new Alfa 156 is the one that brings the biggest smile.

Alfa has been in a bad way for the past few decades. Yet despite the rust, breakdowns, wacky designs, perplexing cabins and general pointlessness of many recent models, there is still a magic about the marque. It is partly the name, so tongue-rollingly romantic, and partly its past. There have been many great old Alfas. Tragically, there have been very few great new ones.

The new 156 promises much more. It looks so lovely, for starters. Not extravagant, not excessive, not particularly eye-catching; rather, like all good design, it has a handsome basic form and caps it with pleasing and imaginative trimmings. The apparent deletion of rear-door handles (they are subtly hidden in a small panel in the corner of the rear window) gives this sporty saloon the look of a coupé, and makes for especially clean flanks. The front-door handles are old-fashioned alloy affairs,

redolent of great Alfas of the past yet substantial and pleasing to touch and operate. It also drives beautifully, composed yet brisk, fluent yet with a hint of fury.

The 156 aims to shake up the German makers' dominance of the small sports saloon market, currently owned by the Audi A4 and BMW 3-series. It is at least as good as these cars, yet more distinctive.

Its excellence should come as no surprise. After all, Alfa really invented the sector, in the Fifties and Sixties, with delicious-looking and driving cars such as Giulias and Giuliettas. They weren't that reliable and they rusted; but few who owned one (and I did) failed to love it. They had such personality and character: such melodious motors, such wholly involving mechanicals (you could almost physically feel the gears meshing). And they were so engaging, on the road, that it was almost as if the four wheels were strapped to your knees and elbows. You felt very close to the action.

State-owned Alfa, like state-owned BL, lost its way dreadfully in the Seventies. Factories were built to provide jobs rather than to make good new cars. Thus the new Pomigliano factory, near Naples, provided work for unemployed locals from Italy's

deprived south. It also served up the worst-made European car of the Seventies, the Alfased.

My mother owned one and I learnt to drive on it. The interior trim peeled off like the skin of a rotting piece of fruit. And, talking of rot, no car rusted faster. You could almost see, and hear, the decay spreading, so quick was the self-destruction. Our lovely red Alfased soon turned into a less fetching shade of oxidised orange, bordered by shades of crumbling brown and, soon after, little peck-a-boo holes. Our car quickly became a colander.

Yet it was marvellous to drive! It was engineered in Milan, where Alfas have always come from, and had the most fantastic engine, handling and brakes of its era. But great design is useless if it is badly made. The Alfased was potentially the greatest car of the Seventies. Instead, it was the most tragic.

The Eighties got off to an equally unpromising start. Remember the Alfa Romeo Arna? It was probably the single most misguided machine of the decade. A joint venture with Nissan, desperate to secure a European manufacturing base in the days before Sunderland, the Arna was a crummy little Nissan Cherry made at the



The Alfa 156: like all good design, it has a handsome basic form capped with imaginative trimmings

lighted Sud factory. It was the worst possible combination. The world was crying out for an Alfa produced to Japanese standards. Instead, it got a character-free Nissan built in Italy. Nobody bought it.

Yet, unlike BL's sporty saloon brand, Triumph, Alfa has survived. More important, under the protection of a cash-rich and innovative parent, Fiat, it is prospering again. Even the dreaded Pomigliano factory now churns out tightly assembled, quality cars.

The 156 is a Pomigliano product, and while it may not be quite as bulletproof as an Audi A4, it is jolly close. So do go and ogle the 156 at the Earls Court show. You will not only see a lovely car, you will also be witnessing the rejuvenation of a much-loved marque.

MY WORST CAR/JONATHAN COLEMAN

The red crock that lured the girls

It was my first and worst car. A really beautiful 1969 Fiat 124 Sport, finished in red. I paid £52,000 (£900 for it and within a year had sunk another \$5,000 into the thing.

It cost me money straightaway because the Fiat had a manual transmission and I had learnt to drive in an automatic. At that time, though, all you had to do was pay for another five lessons and you could switch to a stick shift. So when I started to drive the little Fiat full-time, the fun really started.

The clutch went within days. The heater was a strange device, which either did not work or jammed on permanently so that after a few minutes' driving you would have to open all the windows. Some crucial mechanical parts were less than perfect, which included vague



Coleman: 'when the Fiat broke down, I slept in it'

steering and even more vague brakes. Most of the time I had to pull up the hand-brake to bring the Fiat to a halt. Never mind brake fade, there was paint fade too as the red body got duller by the day. I vividly

remember gaskets leaking, oil being everywhere and having to replace them constantly. It came to a head when I was driving through Sydney one night in torrential rain and the Fiat just stopped dead. This was in the days before mobile phones. The choice was either to trudge through water looking for a phone box, or staying with the car. That was a simple choice: I slept in the Fiat.

Otherwise, it was a very groovy car. Parked outside my house it looked great and made a lovely sporty noise from the exhaust, a very distinctive gargle that all the best Italian cars make.

Basically, the Fiat did what it was intended to do and that was attract girls. Maybe that is why I originally bought it from a girl and later sold it to an-

other. She came and cheerfully collected it from Canberra, but that wasn't the last I heard from her. A few days later she was on the phone complaining that the clutch had gone. Now I'd just had a reconditioned one fitted and the mechanic told me there was six months' life left in it. Maybe they meant to say six weeks.

I only hope that she's not reading this. I can imagine the 124 still being parked outside her house on bricks and her being bitter and twisted about the fact that I lumbered her with the old car.

Jonathan Coleman presents 'Mixing It' on Channel 5, at 6.30pm on Sundays. He co-presented Russ'n'Jono's 'Breakfast Experience' on Virgin Radio. He was talking to James Ruppert.

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